

Charity's lucky dip to highlight disability accommodation shortfalls

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Kristian Silva

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Assisted living accommodation being built in Rockhampton. *Photo: Multicap*

A charity wants to highlight the plight of thousands of Queenslanders with a disability who are on accommodation waiting lists by holding a "lucky dip" draw for one of its sought-after disability units.

Multicap will soon open four state-of-the-art units designed for people with a disability who have elderly carers in Rockhampton.

The \$1.8 million unit block, co-funded by the state government, includes innovative technology, fully disability-compliant bathrooms, kitchen benches that can move up and down, extra wide corridors to accommodate wheelchairs.

Each of the two-bedroom units are likely to be shared by two people with disabilities and their carers, Multicap chief executive Joanne Jessop said.

Ms Jessop said all the units would be allocated to people on waiting lists, including the fourth unit's occupants who would be drawn from three finalists at a public event on June 12.

"We wanted to demonstrate that it is a lucky dip for people getting funding and accommodation," Ms Jessop said.

"It's to show the really big need and randomness of how people get services, and how inappropriate that is.

"We want to raise capital to build the next two units. So the thinking is that while one of the three applicants gets it, we need to raise the funds for the next two."

Ms Jessop said demand for the units from locals had been huge, with some people willing to move from rural areas to Rockhampton if secured the accommodation.

According to federal government figures, there were 6761 Queenslanders with disabilities who were either in specialised accommodation or receiving in-home care during the 2012-13 financial year.

Queensland government data from last financial year showed there were about another 3100 people with disabilities who were on accommodation waiting lists.

In October 2014, the former Newman government announced a third funding round for the \$17 million Elderly Parent Carer Innovation Trial for new specialised disability accommodation.

Current state Disability Minister Coralee O'Rourke confirmed the Labor government would honour the funding pledge after expressions of interest closed this year. She said the government would then assess the trial.

"We understand the concerns of ageing parent carers about the future of their adult children with a disability and we want to assure that the services provided as part of the trial are meeting their needs and providing the best value we can achieve," Ms O'Rourke said.

"I am also looking at what's in place, including the EPCIT trial and the impending National Disability Insurance Scheme, before making any decisions outside our priority election commitments to create jobs and stop asset sales."

This story was found at: <http://www.brisbanetimes.com.au/queensland/charitys-lucky-dip-to-highlight-disability-accommodation-shortfalls-20150304-13vbsq.html>