

## Appendix 6 – Addressing requirements under the Carers (Recognition) Act 2008

The *Carers (Recognition) Act 2008* requires the department to report on compliance with section 9 of the Act in the annual report. The requirements for reporting under the Act include:

- strategies and activities that reflect the principles of the Queensland Carers Charter
- strategies and activities to raise staff awareness and understanding of the Charter
- consultation undertaken with carers and/or representative bodies when planning decisions or strategic policy relevant to carers.

### Services and activities that reflect the principles of the Carers Charter

Carers Charter principles	Departmental services and/or activities in 2009–10
The State recognises the effort and dedication of carers in our community and that carers provide a vital service.	Assistant Director-General, Student Services (Education Queensland), is the departmental representative on the Queensland Carers' Advisory Council, and provides advice to the committee and reports back to Senior Officers in the department on the outcomes of the committee.
Carers deserve the respect of our community and should be supported within their community by all levels of government, institutions and organisations.	<p><i>Supporting Young Carers in Secondary Schools</i> is advertised through the regular communiqué <i>Schools Update</i> which is published on the DET website.</p> <p>School communities are provided with support, including electronic brochures on the Young Carer Counselling Service and the Young Carer Information and Advice Service, via the Senior Guidance Officers and Guidance Officers' network. Youth Support Coordinators are also available to support young carers who experience challenges balancing their school and caring commitments.</p> <p>The <i>Recognising Carers in TAFE</i> document is available on the internet.</p> <p>The <i>TAFE Queensland Carer Strategy 2007–2010</i> and fact sheet have been implemented and are available on a publicly accessible website.</p>
The importance of carers' work means the role of carers should be recognised by including carers, or their representative bodies, in the assessment, planning, delivery and review of services affecting carers.	<p>The DET policy <i>CRP-PR-009: Inclusive Education</i> requires that schools are supportive and engaging places for all students, teachers and members of school community.</p> <p>DET provides learning and working environments where all staff, students and parents/carers are valued for their diverse backgrounds, circumstances, cultures, knowledge, experiences and abilities.</p> <p>The DET policy <i>SMS-PR-029: Managing Student Absences</i> provides for the alteration of a student's education program in some instances, such as for young carers, so that they remain enrolled in the school but do not attend the same hours as their peers.</p>
Complaints made by carers in relation to services that impact on them must be given careful consideration.	The DET policy <i>CMR-PR-001: Complaints Management</i> provides a framework for the complaints management process for Education Queensland schools, districts, regions and central office units.
Carers should be recognised for their unique knowledge and experience, and as individuals with their own needs.	<p>DET allows teachers up to seven years special leave for family responsibilities and up to three years for employees other than teachers.</p> <p>DET's <i>Work-Life Balance</i> policy supports flexible work arrangements including the option for staff to work part-time, use flex time, work from home etc.</p>
Children and young people who are carers should be specifically supported by all of our community. Remote and rurally based carers face additional difficulties caused by isolation.	A statewide interactive professional development videoconference was offered to 244 educators in 32 rural, remote and metropolitan sites on <i>Educating Young People Who are Carers</i> . In addition, the program was offered online for participants.
The caring responsibilities of children and young people should be minimised.	<p>Education Queensland provides a range of educational programs, support strategies and alternative options in inclusive settings to support student attendance and engagement in education during the compulsory schooling and compulsory participation phases.</p> <p>The policy <i>SMS-PR-029: Managing Student Absences</i> provides for the alteration of a student's education program in some instances, such as for young carers, so that they remain enrolled in the school but do not attend the same hours as their peers.</p>

## **Strategies and activities undertaken in 2009–10 to raise staff awareness and understanding of the Carers Charter**

A statewide interactive professional development videoconference was offered to 244 educators in 32 rural, remote and metropolitan sites on *Educating Young People Who are Carers*. In addition, the program was offered online for participants.

A Young Carer Project Officer from Carers Queensland presented to educators during the videoconference. The presentation covered the needs of young people who are carers and how to assist them.

## **Consultation with carers and/or representative bodies when planning decisions or strategic policy relevant to carers**

State schools operate under the Inclusive Education policy (CRP-PR-009) which is under review in 2010. Consultation during the review will include the carers' representative body.

## **Future directions to support carers in DET**

The Department of Education and Training will continue to:

- communicate to staff on the flexible arrangements available to them to achieve balance between work and their personal life, including to raise awareness and understanding of the Carers Charter.
- consult with carers on the development of policies and procedures for the department.