



AASW

**Australian Association
of Social Workers**

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02 October 2020

Mr Jason Costigan
Suite 2, Federation House
20 Chapman Street
PROSERPINE QLD 4800

Dear Mr Costigan,

The Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW) is the professional body representing over 13,000 social workers throughout Australia. We set the benchmark for professional education and practice in social work and have a strong voice on matters of social inclusion, social justice, human rights and issues that impact on the quality of life of all Australians. The Queensland and North Queensland branches represent more than 2,700 members across the state. Our members are employed in a range of roles in government departments, non-government organisations and in private practice in areas including child protection, family violence, health, mental health, justice, housing and homelessness, disability, aged care along with other disadvantaged individuals, families and communities.

Social workers aim to enhance the quality of life of every member of society and empower them to develop their full potential. We believe that everyone has the right to an environment (social, economic and natural) in which it is possible to flourish and thrive.

A state election is a pivotal opportunity for a government to create the conditions under which people will pursue healthy, meaningful and rewarding lives. As social workers, we measure the success of any government based on the social impact of their policies.

On behalf of our members we are seeking your party's response to the following questions. We will share your response with our members to assist in informing their voting decision in the election.

Please find attached our Queensland Election Policy Platform 2020 which outlines our positions and rationale for our questions.

1. Social Work Registration

- What is your commitment to statutory registration of social workers in Queensland?

2. Mental Health

- What is your commitment to the full implementation of the *Shifting Minds* strategic plan?
- What are your plans to resource community mental health services in QLD?
- Will you commit to develop student wellbeing teams in every secondary school, at a minimum ratio of one school social worker per 500 students?
- Will you commit to provide sustained funding to LGBTIQ specialist mental health services?

3. Domestic and Family Violence

- Given that gender inequality is so inextricably linked to family violence, what policies and initiatives will your party implement to address gender inequality and prevent family violence?
- Can you clarify for our members what your plans are to invest in family violence services and the provision of compulsory DFV professional development for court staff, judicial officers and police?

4. Child Protection

- What is your commitment to a bipartisan strategy in child protection?
- What are your plans to commit to a sustained whole-of-government and community early intervention services framework?
- What are your plans to address the overrepresentation of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children in the child protection system?
- What is your commitment to providing Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women with the appropriate resources, including workload ratios to achieve the wellbeing and safety of children and young people?

5. Homelessness

- What are your plans to address homelessness and the shortage of affordable housing supply in QLD?
- What is your commitment to ensure the inclusivity of current housing schemes so that the needs of people of all backgrounds can be met?

6. Reconciliation

- What is your commitment to implementing the National Agreement on Closing the Gap?
- What are your plans to address the overrepresentation of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people in the justice system?

7. Aged Care


- What are your plans to provide community mental health and palliative care for older Queenslanders?
- What are your plans to provide access to social work support for older Queenslanders to improve social and emotional wellbeing?

8. Refugee and People Seeking Asylum

- What are your plans to provide support for people seeking asylum and refuge in QLD?

Thank you for taking the time to consider our questions and we look forward to sharing your response with our members in the lead up to the election.

Yours sincerely,



Ellen Beaumont
QLD Branch President



Ross Murray
NQLD Branch President



Cindy Smith
Chief Executive Officer

Encl: AASW Queensland Election Policy Statement