

PROGRAM: School Age Therapy Support – North Queensland

DATE: Jan 2009

OVERVIEW OF THE PROGRAM

The **NQ School Age Therapy Support service** provides services to children with cerebral palsy and related disabilities within educational settings to assist with the achievement of educational goals. The Cerebral Palsy League of Queensland has been funded by the Commonwealth Government's Non-Schools Organisation (NSO) to provide this service. Services are primarily delivered within the educational setting.

The purpose of the NQ School Age Therapy Support service is to provide specialised, therapy support to help students to access and participate in their school curriculum and so improve their educational opportunities, learning outcome(s) and personal development.

The NQ School Age Therapy Support service seeks to enhance the capacity of schools by collaborating with teachers and other staff in educational settings to provide effective educational programs and resources for children. Where Education Queensland or non-government schools employ therapists to work in their schools, the CPLQ therapists provide additional, therapy support. They bring extra resources and specialised knowledge and skill to the school based team.

PROGRAM ELEMENTS

The **NQ School Age Therapy Support service** offers a range of supports to children and their schools, including:

- Provision of information and education relating to supporting children with a physical disability.
- Contribution to the IEP process, by providing appropriate information, assistance with goal development, attendance at meetings (where relevant) and other necessary input as negotiated with education staff.
- Information, advice and training are provided to teachers and therapists in educational settings (eg. modifying physical environments, use of equipment, technology and strategies for achievement of learning outcomes).
- Therapy programs are provided where the development of skills or improvement in a functional area is identified as a goal.
- Prescription, provision, maintenance and training in the use of specialised equipment in the areas of communication, posture, mobility, learning, daily living and mealtime management is provided to allow children to participate fully in their educational environment.

The **NQ School Age Therapy Support service** is not funded to provide therapy services where no links can be established to the student's access and participation in the curriculum. Some items that are generally not funded include: medical initiatives (eg. post surgical and post botox therapy, serial casting); health aids (eg. shower chairs, hoists); transport (eg. vehicle modifications); housing modifications advice and reports. These may be provided by the therapists through other sources of funding and other program initiatives.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

To be eligible to receive a service from the NQ School Age Therapy Support service a child must:

- Be aged between 0-18 years of age,
- Have a confirmed diagnosis of cerebral palsy or related physical disability (neurological origin on muscle tone and movement that impacts), and
- Meet requirements for Educational Adjustment Profile (EAP) in the area of Physical Impairment.

In addition to these basic eligibility criteria the child/family must also:

- Have an Individual Education Plan (IEP) if child is over 3 years of age,

PROGRAM:	School Age Therapy Support – North Queensland	DATE:	Jan 2009
-----------------	---	--------------	----------

- Have high support needs, and
- Attend an educational placement and reside within a locality where the service is delivered.

AMOUNT OF SUPPORT

The **NQ School Age Therapy Support service** is funded to provide therapy support to a large number of students across the region. The level of supplementary funds from NSO to employ therapists and the significant amount of travel by the team to provide an equitable service to students in schools means that demand for visits may exceed team capacity. Whilst every endeavour is made to accommodate requests for visits as soon as possible, in many instances wait times may apply.

SERVICE REGION

Current funding enables service provision to schools within the following geographic areas:

- Townsville
- Cairns (including Atherton Tablelands)
- Mt Isa

CONTACT FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more information please contact Manager – Child & Family Support Services, Jo Greenwood-Smith, on (07) 4799 9600, or email at jgreenwood@cplqld.org.au