

MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October, 2011

Brisbane Charity To Move With The Times

A leading Queensland charity has announced it will be relocating its head offices in order to better service children and young adults across the state living with physical disabilities.

MontroseAccess, which offers therapy, recreation and respite services to Queenslanders with physical disabilities, has been based at its Corinda site for 75 years. Now, a decision has been made to farewell the familiar grounds and relocate to move with the times.

MontroseAccess CEO, Darrel Bourke, said: "When we first moved onto this site in 1936, we had children and staff living here, we offered medical care and education as well as accommodation for children living with the effects of polio. A lot has changed since then, including our model of care. We now offer support off-site, in our clients' homes, schools and community. It's less institutional and we seldom have clients on-site."

The site has a proud history. During the Second World War, American soldiers would visit the clients to offer them a break from their therapy routine. British navy officers were even known to take the children down to the ships on the river for day outings.

Today, the site is lovingly maintained and gardens cover a considerable part of the riverside property, but the clients don't have a need for such vast spaces, and neither do the staff. Further to this, the cost of maintaining the grounds is considerable, when that money could be ploughed back into service delivery.

"If the decision were to be based on sentimentality, we wouldn't want to leave, but it has been made with extensive consultation and research on how to best service our clients today and long into the future. When we find new offices, we'll have far less site related expenses and that money will go directly towards improving our services to clients state-wide" Darrel went on to say.

MontroseAccess will submit a Development Application to Brisbane City Council next month. If accepted, the site will be put on the market for residential development. However, no move is expected until at least 2014. The organisation will also ensure that development consists of low-rise, free-standing dwellings in keeping with the surrounding neighbourhood. It will also ensure that parkland is retained and the public will keep river access.

The charity's therapy and administration staff will move to new offices in a location yet to be determined. Brisbane's southwest growth corridor is being considered as it is predicted to be one of the country's five most rapid growth areas in the coming years and where much of the organisation's new clients will come from. Existing clients will still receive the same support they have to date and MontroseAccess' regional offices will not be affected by the relocation.

Respite clients will also benefit from the move as MontroseAccess will look to purchase land and build a state of the art respite facility that can meet the growing demand for this service.

Disability care for kids



Currently, 1 in 22 Queensland children has some sort of physical disability. Many of these have rare or undiagnosed conditions and would benefit from MontroseAccess services. With a growing population, and growing demand on services, MontroseAccess is proudly taking steps to ensure its facilities and location will meet demand long into the future, just as it has done for the last three quarters of a century.

As well as more appropriate facilities and location, the organisation is safeguarding its financial future. Every year, MontroseAccess has to fundraise \$1.4-million to cover government funding shortfall for services. Relocation will free up assets and reduce operating costs.

If you have any comments or questions about the proposed relocation, MontroseAccess would like to hear from you. There is a free hotline number you can call or dedicated email address to write to:

Hotline: 1800 815 181

Email: corindainfo@montroseaccess.org.au

If you would like high res images or to arrange a photo shoot or interview, please feel free to contact MontroseAccess Communications Manager, Adam Harper, on (07) 3717 1184 or 0404 871 360 or email aharper@montroseaccess.org.au

NOTES TO EDITORS:

MontroseAccess provides therapy, respite and recreation services to more than 600 children and young adults with physical disabilities throughout Queensland. This is delivered through our four metropolitan offices at Brisbane, Brisbane North, Sunshine Coast and Gold Coast, with outreach programs accessing regional and remote parts of the state.

Formed in 1933 as the Queensland Society For Crippled Children, the organisation was established to support children living with the effects of polio. Since then, it has grown to provide varied and holistic services to clients with varying degrees of disability; some of the most common being neuromuscular conditions, juvenile arthritis, acquired brain injury and arthrogryposis. Our clients age from toddlers (through our Early Childhood Program) to young adults (the Lifestyle & Leisure Program).

MontroseAccess is an independent not-for-profit organisation without political or religious affiliation. We do not duplicate services provided by condition specific organisations – we provide services to those young people who would not otherwise be able to obtain them.

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