



Speech by

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MEMBER FOR BARRON RIVER

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BREAST CANCER SCREENING UNIT

Dr CLARK (Barron River—ALP) (7.05 p.m.): Breast cancer strikes one in 12 Queensland women. To each of us here, that probably means that at least one of our women friends will develop the disease during their lifetimes. Most of us would also be aware that early detection, particularly for women over 40, is the best protection against breast cancer developing into a fatal disease.

I have been able to take advantage of the free breast screening service located in Calvary Hospital in Cairns, but women in far-north Queensland living in rural and remote communities have been denied such ready access to this potentially lifesaving service.

All that is about to change. Early this month I was privileged to launch the Queensland Health Relocatable Free Breast Screening Service. For the first time we will bring this service to women in remote parts of far-north Queensland. The relocatable service consists of a \$100,000 purpose-built four-wheel-drive truck, which will transport mammography equipment and staff by road into the gulf and Cape York Peninsula and by barge to Horn Island in the Torres Strait. Communities close to Cairns between Cardwell and Mossman, and onto the Tablelands, have not been forgotten and will also be included in the service. Including those areas in my electorate of the northern beaches and Kuranda, some 34 centres will receive the service.

Planning for this service goes back many years and involves a great many dedicated and committed Queensland Health staff. I would like to place on record my appreciation, and I am sure the appreciation of the women of far-north Queensland, to Miss Linda Baker, manager of Community Health Services; Miss Jennifer Muller, manager of the Women's Counselling and Screening Service and her staff, and particularly Dr Patricia Fagen and Dr Geoff Miller who undertook initial technical feasibility studies and community consultation to help develop this unique service for the benefit of far-north Queensland women.
