



Speech by

Hon. WENDY EDMOND

MEMBER FOR MOUNT COOT-THA

Hansard 19 August 1999

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Health Promotion Queensland

Hon. W. M. EDMOND (Mount Coot-tha— ALP) (Minister for Health) (9.57 a.m.), by leave: Yet again, the Beattie Labor Government is delivering on its commitment to improve the health and wellbeing of Queenslanders. Today, it is with great pleasure that I am able to announce the establishment of Health Promotion Queensland, which had its first meeting on Tuesday this week.

Health Promotion Queensland is the new health promotion council, which will support the expansion and integration of a preventive focus to Queensland Health. Members on this side of the House will be aware that re-funding a health promotion council was one of this Government's key 1998 election commitments in the Health portfolio.

Health Promotion Queensland will be chaired by Professor Ken Donald, the head of the Department of Social and Preventive Medicine at the University of Queensland. Professor Donald brings a wealth of academic experience to the chairman's job.

Health Promotion Queensland has an excellent mix of academic, research and grassroots experience in the area of health promotion. It will ensure that Queensland is well served by Health Promotion Queensland. I would point out, however, that while the funding of Health Promotion Queensland represents the honouring of yet another Beattie Labor election commitment, it also makes an important policy statement about how this Government approaches health. This Government takes a holistic view of health: that is, health is not just about rehabilitation and treatment of ill health in hospital settings but it is also about the prevention of ill health in the first place. It is about supporting good health in the primary care setting. It is about community health.

This approach is important to the good management of Queensland's health dollars, given that the return on funds which prevent ill health and promote wellbeing generates a greater return on the health dollar than hospitalisation. Rather than funding myriad small, short-term and difficult to evaluate projects, Health Promotion Queensland will fund a small number of significant projects which will be rigorously evaluated and reviewed. I anticipate that between four and six projects will be funded in the first instance.

I have requested that projects which target men's health and older peoples' health be the priority for the first year of operation. The health of men and older people represent two areas where, with appropriate health promotion interventions, significant gains can be made which will assist dramatically in alleviating the demands at the acute end of the health system.

This Government has an understanding of and a vision for the health system in Queensland. Clearly, the Beattie Labor Government is working towards that vision—a vision for a truly holistic, integrated and seamless health system for the benefit, health and wellbeing of all Queenslanders. I seek leave to table a list of Health Promotion Queensland members and the relevant skills they bring to the job.

Leave granted.
