



Speech by

**Shane Knuth**

**MEMBER FOR CHARTERS TOWERS**

Hansard Wednesday, 12 May 2004

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## **CHARTERS TOWERS HOSPITAL CAR PARK**

### **Charters Towers Hospital Car Park**

**Mr KNUTH** (Charters Towers—NPA) (6.21 p.m.): The Charters Towers Hospital serves a huge area, and many patients, their families and friends drive to the hospital every day. Most of them have no choice but to drive because the people of Charters Towers do not have the luxury of subsidised public transport with services running to regular schedules.

I would like to bring to the House's attention the lack of appropriate parking at the Charters Towers Hospital. Patients visiting the hospital are unable to park within the hospital grounds and must park on the street in front of the hospital. This would not normally present a problem, but the Charters Towers Hospital is built on a high block of land and patients have often had difficulties making their way up the steep slopes in order to get to the hospital. Patients with disabilities or injuries face an even more difficult challenge in accessing the hospital grounds.

I have had a wide range of discussions with community groups, including the over 60s. I could not believe that the present and previous governments have not provided an outpatient and visitor parking area at the hospital. Many patients have no choice but to track uphill from parking in Gill Street to the hospital outpatients department. This is a hard walk for the sick, frail and elderly. I do not believe there are many hospitals in Queensland that do not provide parking for their patients. Some patients have family and friends who could drop them at the main entrance, but those people are then forced to find parking on the main street and trek back up the hill.

I would like to suggest that a parking area be provided within the hospital grounds. This parking area could be located in front of the nurses' quarters as the area is currently grassed. The cost involved would be far less than alternative locations. I have written to the Minister for Health asking him to take this up as a matter of urgency. Given that the project would cost very little, it should be one that the minister could direct his department to proceed with immediately because it would be a major benefit for the

patients of Charters Towers. I have yet to receive a response from the minister and I ask him to look into this matter and act with haste.