



Speech by

# Hon. Stephen Robertson

MEMBER FOR STRETTON

Hansard Wednesday, 5 September 2007

---

## MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

### Paediatric Cardiac Services

**Hon. S ROBERTSON** (Stretton—ALP) (Minister for Health) (10.02 am): I am pleased to inform the House that cardiac services for Queensland children will be significantly improved from next year. As members would be aware, paediatric cardiac services at the Prince Charles Hospital will transfer to the Mater Children's Hospital early next year in preparation for one single Queensland Children's Hospital in 2011. Pressure on the Prince Charles cardiac paediatric intensive care unit has already eased this year with its number of beds increasing from three to four. When services move to the Mater next year, the number of paediatric cardiac beds will increase to nine: five intensive care unit beds and four high dependency unit beds. The Prince Charles Hospital can currently perform six paediatric cardiac operations a week but over time this will increase at the Mater.

Waiting times at the Prince Charles Hospital have already reduced in the past year. In August last year, 75 children were waiting an average 100 days for cardiac surgery. Now 70 children are waiting an average 79 days. The Mater transfer has the potential to reduce waits further with the increase in the number of intensive care beds. The capacity to diagnose heart problems and perform procedures such as repairing a hole in the heart will also improve at the Mater with greater access to the cardiac catheter laboratory. Currently, paediatric and adult cardiac patients share the lab, meaning access for children is limited to three three-hour sessions a week. This will improve at the Mater where we are funding a new cardiac catheter lab which will provide diagnostic and interventional procedures for children five days a week. Adults at the Prince Charles Hospital will then have full access to the existing lab, improving services there.

This development is great news for our youngest cardiac patients. It is also a significant reform at Prince Charles Hospital which is currently undergoing a \$134 million redevelopment to improve its adult health services and take pressure off other public hospitals on the north side.