



Speech by

## Hon. Margaret Keech

MEMBER FOR ALBERT

Hansard Tuesday, 18 August 2009

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### COOMERA COMMUNITY CHILD HEALTH CENTRE

**Hon. MM KEECH** (Albert—ALP) (10.58 pm): Recently, on behalf of the health minister, I had the pleasure of opening the Bligh government's brand-new Coomera Community Child Health Centre in Upper Coomera, one of Australia's fastest-growing suburbs. While the population on the Gold Coast is projected to age over the next decade, in Albert we are seeing a very different growth pattern with a high concentration of young working families under the age of 45 years calling the northern Gold Coast home. In fact, over the next 25 years the population of the northern Gold Coast corridor is projected to grow at an average annual rate of more than four per cent, compared to just 1.8 per cent for the South-East Queensland corner. When it comes to catering for the growth in the number of young families arriving in Albert, I am very proud that the Bligh government is thinking outside the traditional health model by developing community centres like the one I opened at Upper Coomera. It is based on a model that argues that the best health care need not necessarily always be delivered in a large hospital setting. Busy families tell me that they want health services that are best quality but that are handy and easy to get to. That is exactly what the Bligh government has delivered with the new community child health centre at Upper Coomera.

The centre has been operating since August last year and provides essential services to mothers and their newborn babies and toddlers. Since opening, the centre has been extremely busy, providing nearly 1,000 assessments to infants and toddlers from birth to three years of age, and it has also provided access to a social worker to 12 families. My visit to the centre occurred during its very popular drop-in clinic service. I got to meet some of Albert's youngest and cutest new residents, including the beautiful Sophie Evans and her mum Jennifer. It was wonderful to see a constant stream of mums, dads, big brothers and sisters proudly bringing new babies along to the clinic to make the most of this excellent service. I enjoyed meeting the centre's hardworking staff and later presented them with a certificate to congratulate them on the wonderful service they provide for our community.

I was most impressed with Linda Watson and her team of professionals, who are so dedicated to the health and wellbeing of their little patients and their families. As they arrived, every parent and baby was warmly welcomed by name and the new parents were immediately made to feel very welcome. The popular service is clear evidence that the Bligh government is delivering essential health services and infrastructure for a growing population when, where and how it is needed most. I am very proud that, in line with our Q2 vision to make Queensland Australia's healthiest state, the health needs of all Albert residents are being very well provided for by the new Bligh government's Coomera Community Child Health Centre at Upper Coomera.