



Speech by

Peter Lawlor

MEMBER FOR SOUTHPORT

Hansard Thursday, 12 February 2009

GOLD COAST HEALTH SERVICE DISTRICT

Mr LAWLOR (Southport—ALP) (8.18 pm): On 16 January this year, I joined with the health minister, Stephen Robertson, at the opening of the Gold Coast Hospital's new \$14.5 million day surgery centre. This centre consists of three new surgery theatres and is expected to perform 6,000 elective procedures each year. As at 16 January, 820 procedures had already been performed at the centre. In the December 2008 quarter, the Gold Coast Health Service District performed 5,205 operative procedures, including ECT for depression and endoscopy. This compares to 4,716 cases in the same period in 2007. The increase of 10 per cent plus is largely accounted for by the surgery centre.

Waiting lists for elective surgery on the Gold Coast are continuing to fall due largely to the new centre and a range of other measures implemented by the Gold Coast Health Service District. The new centre delivers surgical treatments in the areas of ophthalmology, plastics, neurosurgery, gynaecology, urology, and general procedures under local and general anaesthetics.

The Bligh government's record \$6 billion investment in the hospital infrastructure program—Australia's largest—is history making. The \$1.55 billion Gold Coast University Hospital—the largest of the five state health projects when completed in 2012—will have 750 beds and offer comprehensive medical services including cancer care, cardiac and trauma services. The Robina Hospital is undergoing a \$287.7 million expansion which will deliver 179 extra beds and enhanced services to Gold Coast residents. This is another example of the Bligh government getting on with the job of delivering greater health outcomes for Queenslanders while keeping the state at the forefront of medical research and innovation.

The Toward Q2 strategy is a blueprint for delivering greater health services to high-population growth areas such as the Gold Coast. Coincidentally, on the same day the first sod was turned on the \$1.55 billion Gold Coast University Hospital, Premier Anna Bligh and health minister Stephen Robertson were on hand to mark this important milestone of what is currently the country's biggest health development. The new hospital will deliver to Gold Coasters a world-class health facility with more comprehensive services in cancer care, cardiac, neurosciences, neonatal intensive care and trauma services. With 750 beds, the new hospital will have almost twice the capacity of the existing hospital, so many more Gold Coast residents and visitors can be treated closer to home.

The new hospital situated at Parklands is co-located with Griffith University and will be both a teaching and research facility. This will create a shared environment where the teaching of future generations of health workers will be undertaken alongside the hands-on delivery of patient care. The new hospital will be a nine-storey structure with a total construction area of 165,000 square metres. That is about four times the size of the existing Gold Coast Hospital and will have plenty of room for expansion. Three thousand car parking spaces in two multistorey car parks will provide easy access and safe parking for staff, patients and visitors.