




Speech by

Shane Knuth

MEMBER FOR DALRYMPLE

Hansard Thursday, 13 October 2011

MORANBAH, MATERNITY SERVICES

 **Mr KNUTH** (Dalrymple—LNP) (3.34 pm): I rise to raise a serious concern regarding the lack of maternity services in Moranbah. While staff at Moranbah Hospital do a wonderful job to provide a valuable health service to the region, staff are hamstrung by a lack of provided resources and many patients have no choice but to be referred to Mackay. The state government is denying local women the ability to have an uncomplicated delivery surrounded by their family in local surroundings.

The greatest gift a family and a community can receive is to welcome a newborn baby into this world. For the parents, it is unparalleled by anything else in their lives. Nothing in this world could measure the depth of joy that a newborn child brings to a family. Therefore, it is unacceptable to compel pregnant women to travel hundreds of kilometres from their home town to major coastal cities to give birth. It imposes an unnecessary financial burden, causes personal strain and separates mothers from their families for up to three weeks during a very precious time in their lives.

It is not the mothers' fault that the maternity service in their home town is not fully available. It is vitally important to recognise the financial strain on families, who pay the costs of travel and motels, where pregnant mums stay for periods up to three weeks before giving birth. I am talking about women who have uncomplicated pregnancies. It is paramount that accommodation is provided and that greater incentive packages are granted to encourage hospital staff to work and be trained in rural and regional hospitals.

The Moranbah region produces over \$6 billion in gross revenue and is expanding rapidly. Moranbah Hospital should be resourced to ensure that no-one is forced to Mackay, Rockhampton or Brisbane, particularly pregnant mums.