




Speech by
Bill Byrne

MEMBER FOR ROCKHAMPTON

Hansard Thursday, 23 August 2012

CENTRAL QUEENSLAND UNIVERSITY, ALLIED HEALTH CLINIC

 **Mr BYRNE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (2.54 pm): I rise to welcome the opening of the Central Queensland University public allied health clinic located at the university's growing campus in Rockhampton. On Monday, 13 August, at 8.30 am, the doors to this sprawling \$12 million facility were opened to the public for the first time. Its very first client, local woman Anne Guthrie, arrived bright and early for her occupational therapy appointment and was welcomed as the first of many generations of Central Queenslanders who will receive first-rate care and treatment at this world-class facility.

I was delighted to have been given a private tour of this impressive clinic by the vice-chancellor in the week before it opened, and I was bowled over by what the university has achieved for its community. Around 160 clients a day will have access to critical-need services like occupational therapy, physiotherapy, podiatry, nutrition, oral health and speech pathology. The clinical consultation rooms, procedures rooms, physical rehabilitation facilities, assessment rooms, laboratories and teaching spaces—along with all the technical equipment and technologies—are simply first-class industry standard. Not only are the facilities and fit-out impressive, but architecturally this clinic is a standout from anything I have seen before. It is truly a modern facility of which the Rockhampton community can be extremely proud. Certainly patients will not feel like they are in a traditional, sterile, bleak clinical environment.

The critical-need health services that the clinic delivers did not arrive at this facility by accident. They are all health disciplines that the Central Queensland University has introduced via new degrees this year at considerable cost. The students studying these new health degrees now have a working clinic in which to refine their skills via clinical placements. Over 200 allied health students each year will benefit from six-week clinical placements, fully supervised by health professionals in a real-life working clinic.

I know there are members in this chamber who realise how difficult it is for a university to come by 200 clinical placements, and I congratulate the university for this remarkable achievement. Not only has Central Queensland University built a world-class clinic that delivers critical allied health services in areas of chronic shortage, but it will also train future generations of health professionals who will be more inclined to remain in regional Queensland upon graduation. I congratulate the university, the Commonwealth government and Queensland Health for working together to see this clinic open for business last week.

I know that the member for Keppel has already had a look at the clinic while it was under construction, and he would agree with me that we are proud regional representatives and proud of the Central Queensland University. One outstanding aspect is the stage 2 development of that clinic, reliant on \$16 million of Commonwealth funding that is associated with the amalgamation of the university and the TAFE which I hope will proceed as planned.