




Speech By
Hon. Cameron Dick

MEMBER FOR WOODRIDGE

Record of Proceedings, 19 May 2015

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Palaszczuk Labor Government, Achievements

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (9.51 am): I am pleased to report to the House that the Palaszczuk government has hit the ground running when it comes to health. We are delivering better front-line services to Queenslanders. The discredited wait-time gimmick of the member for Southern Downs, which I inherited, consisted solely of spending \$77 million on bureaucracy, consultants and advertising; not one cent on hospitals. We have stopped the gimmicks, we have stopped the consultants and we are redirecting some of the money we have saved towards making real inroads into waiting lists. We have made available \$30 million to hospital and health services for the remainder of this financial year to fund more than 10,000 additional specialist outpatient appointments—

Mr Springborg interjected.

Mr DICK: Is someone saying something? I am finding it difficult to continue. As I was saying, that money will be used to fund more than 10,000 additional specialist outpatient appointments, more than 5,000 additional endoscopies and more than 2,000 additional inpatient procedures. Two weeks ago, the Premier and I announced that we are investing \$30 million additionally in front-line services so that people currently on a waiting list for ear, nose and throat services can be seen faster and receive their treatment quicker. I am pleased to report that this will have a real impact on the lives of real Queenslanders.

We are also committed to reforming the mental health system in this state. The situation we inherited was that the Leader of the Opposition rushed legislation into the House—legislation that he had not bothered to show in its complete and final form to anyone outside of government. It was a bill that was riddled with technical errors and that missed key policy areas. By contrast, we are hastening slowly and we are getting it right. We have released an exposure draft that fixes the mistakes and addresses the policy omissions of the member for Southern Downs. We are giving Queenslanders the opportunity to comment on the bill in its entirety and in its final form. We are also putting real services on the ground in this area, reversing the damage caused by the Leader of the Opposition's \$50 million cut to mental health services. Last month, I travelled to Townsville to announce two new residential youth facilities that will enable young people to learn life skills as they recover from mental illness.

This is an activist government that is determined to get past the spin of the previous government, which saw waiting lists as a political problem that could be fixed by a gimmicky advertising campaign. By contrast, we are putting real money into more operations and procedures, and we are delivering more front-line services to Queenslanders.