



Speech By  
**Shane Knuth**


**MEMBER FOR DALRYMPLE**

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Record of Proceedings, 29 October 2015

**PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT**

**Dimbulah Hospital**

 **Mr KNUTH** (Dalrymple—KAP) (2.43 pm): On Tuesday, 27 October I tabled a petition containing 787 signatures calling for an urgent and critical upgrade to the Dimbulah Primary Health Centre, locally known as the Dimbulah hospital. The Dimbulah community are passionate about this issue and have been very proactive in lobbying my office and the Cairns and Hinterland Hospital and Health Service for a replacement facility to house the only medical service in that rural community.

In recent days, just prior to his resignation, the chair of the Cairns and Hinterland Hospital and Health Board acknowledged the urgent status of this project. This need has further been acknowledged by the Minister for Health. I also take this opportunity to thank the former chair of the hospital board, Bob Norman, for his work and dedication to bettering health services across the electorate.

This petition of the residents of Dimbulah and district draws to the attention of the House the critical need to upgrade the Dimbulah Primary Health Centre as a matter of urgency. The Dimbulah hospital is a major centre and it provides a combination of essential health services for members of communities in both the Dalrymple and Cook electorates.

This facility was built in 1964 and no renovation has been carried out to this day, with asbestos known to be an issue in the structure. On behalf of my community, I bring to the attention of the House that the building is rapidly deteriorating under the harsh elements experienced in Far North Queensland. Significantly, the outdated and deteriorating facility frankly does not lend itself to the delivery of contemporary health services. There are constraints relating to the safety of patients and health workers. The administration hub is situated in the hallway, which has no capacity for confidentiality and privacy—a major concern for health professionals and patients alike. The narrow doorways also prevent access for wheelchairs and trolleys. This raises grave concerns for patient transfers and impacts ambulance officers and hospital staff in the course of doing their job in caring for patients.

The Dimbulah hospital works in conjunction with the Mareeba Hospital located 45 kilometres away and reduces the burden of Mareeba families. Significantly, the Dimbulah hospital service reduces the number of vehicles on the main road network and is of enormous benefit to elderly and vulnerable members of the community. The Dimbulah hospital plays a critical role in providing a place for people who are isolated by distance or illness. An upgraded health centre would ensure that patient care and emergency services are maximised.

On behalf of the petitioners, I respectfully request the House to fast-track the upgrade of the primary health centre at Dimbulah. Accordingly, I also table in the House letters of support from the community and, further, a non-conforming petition calling on the minister to visit the hospital site so that the minister can see firsthand the appalling conditions of the Dimbulah hospital. I respect the minister

and ask him to respect the wishes of the good people of Dalrymple by doing them the courtesy of attending the electorate in response to the letters and petition.

*Tabled paper:* Non-conforming petition regarding the Dimbulah community healthcare facility [\[1523\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Correspondence, various dates, addressed or copied to the Member for Dalrymple, Mr Shane Knuth MP, regarding the Dimbulah Primary Health Care Centre [\[1524\]](#).