




Speech By
Hon. Cameron Dick

MEMBER FOR WOODRIDGE

Record of Proceedings, 17 June 2016

**APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL; APPROPRIATION BILL; DUTIES AND
OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (3.10 pm): The 2016 state budget delivers more doctors, more nurses, more allied health professionals, better healthcare facilities, more ambulances and more ambulance officers for the people of Queensland. Here is what it does not do: cut jobs. The Palaszczuk Labor government supports those 90,000 people who work in the Queensland health system. Those opposite had as their first priority sacking them. After the first budget of the LNP government in 2012 the big debate was not over new or expanded services, better innovation and integration in health care or new infrastructure initiatives but, rather, how many jobs were being cut. Was Budget Paper No. 2 of that year right when it stated that there would be 4,140 full-time-equivalent redundancies in Health in 2012-13 or was the member for Southern Downs, the then minister for health, right when he stated that only 2,754 full-time-equivalent jobs would go from Queensland Health? That is the debate that took place when the members of the LNP ran Queensland: how many people were going to be sacked—4,140 or only 2,754.

Only the Palaszczuk Labor government has a plan for health. In his budget reply yesterday the Leader of the Opposition and member for Clayfield devoted just 157 words out of 6,220 to health—the largest portfolio in the Queensland government. In those 157 words he again touted what the LNP see as their big triumph in health when in office: their wait-time gimmick. This was a policy which ignored completely the people waiting to get on a waiting list. There were over 100,000 people in that category. What they saw with the LNP was an outfit that was promising something to people further up the line than them, but for those people waiting, nothing.

Health workers around the state would be alarmed after yesterday's budget reply speech by the member for Clayfield and Leader of the Opposition. There was no apology by the Leader of the Opposition to Queensland Health workers for mass sackings. There was no apology by the Leader of the Opposition to health workers for smashing front-line services. There was no commitment by the Leader of the Opposition to fight for their health jobs. There was no recognition nor apology for the LNP's health legacy: a risky children's hospital opening, the risky closure of an adolescent mental health facility, real cuts to mental health spending and an attack on front-line services. Health workers around Queensland simply cannot and will not trust the member for Clayfield.

By contrast, ours is a Labor budget with a greater emphasis on front-line services. It delivers \$12.614 billion, or 82.6 per cent of the total operating budget, to hospital and health services. This is an increase of 8.6 per cent compared to last year's budget but, more importantly, is 16.8 per cent higher, or \$1.7 billion more, than was allocated to hospital and health services in the final budget of the member for Clayfield. The budget also includes \$230 million to fund significant health infrastructure upgrades around the state and \$170 million in upgrades to critical ICT infrastructure. In total, \$1.4 billion will be invested in capital works infrastructure in the health portfolio in 2016-17.

The Queensland Ambulance Service budget has been increased by 6.3 per cent to \$673.1 million. This will mean an extra 110 ambulance officers and 170 new or refurbished ambulances. Having obtained the approval of the Deputy Speaker, I seek leave to incorporate the remainder of my budget reply speech into the parliamentary record.

Leave granted.

This is a Labor budget with a greater emphasis on frontline services. And it is framed around our government's 10-year strategy for Health in Queensland—My health, Queensland's future: Advancing Health 2026.

This strategy outlines that by 2026 Queenslanders will be among the healthiest people in the world and this outcome will be guided by four key directions and relevant targets over the next decade. The directions are:

Promoting wellbeing

Delivering healthcare

Connecting healthcare; and

Pursuing innovation

The first direction—Promoting Wellbeing—is about improving the health of Queenslanders through promoting good health behaviours, preventing illness and injury and addressing the social determinants of health.

We've already made significant progress on this direction through programs such as the 10,000 steps program, the Heart Foundation walking groups and the new food labelling legislation.

This budget also provides an additional \$15.8 million over three years to implement the Sexually Transmissible Infections Action Plan. This is in response to the increasing notification rates of infectious syphilis among North Queensland's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

In support of mental health services in Queensland, this budget also provides an additional \$12 million to build three new community-managed mental health facilities in Mackay, Bundaberg and Gladstone.

The budget also provides \$9.6 million over the next three years to help hospital and health services build their capacity to prevent suicide.

One measure will involve training one person in each emergency department who will then train others in identifying people at risk.

Late last year the Palaszczuk Labor Government announced additional frontline services in response to the chaotic effect Ice is having on individuals, families and communities in Queensland.

This Budget will provide an additional \$6 million to continue to support the Drug and Alcohol Brief Intervention Teams in emergency departments in Logan, Rockhampton and Townsville Hospitals and a range of response services in Cooktown, Gold Coast, Charleville and Cunnamulla.

Under the second direction of Advancing Health 2026—Delivering Healthcare—the budget provides \$12.614 billion, or 82.6 per cent of the total operating budget, to Hospital and Health Services.

This is an increase of 8.6 per cent compared to last year's budget, but more importantly, is 16.8 per cent higher—or \$1.7 billion—more than was allocated to HHSs in the final budget of the Opposition Leader.

On the rare occasions that members opposite talk about health, generally it's to say that we're gutting the Hospital and Health Services.

Let the record show otherwise. Each and every Hospital and Health Service around Queensland has considerably more money than was allocated by the Member for Clayfield in his last budget.

Gold Coast, \$219 million better off under the Labor Government than the member for Clayfield; Cairns, \$110 million better off, Townsville, \$106 million better off.

The Queensland Ambulance Service budget has also grown 6.3 per cent this year to \$673.1 million—that's 170 more ambulances and 110 more ambulance officers.

The budget provides \$6 million over four years for expanded pre-exposure prophylaxis, or PrEP trials which have the potential to reduce the transmission of HIV in Queensland. PrEP involves a single tablet taken once daily to shield people from acquiring HIV. We have the very real prospect of wiping out HIV in Queensland with this measure.

As part of a five point plan to drive efficiencies and keep emergency departments and ambulances moving this flu season, an additional \$15M will be provided to HHSs.

Under the third direction in Advancing Health 2026, Connecting Healthcare, the budget provides an additional 68 nurse navigators to work across system boundaries in close partnership with other health and allied-health services to support appropriate and timely patient care and improved health outcomes.

There is also an additional \$700,000 in 2016-17 to fund an education program for health staff across a range of domestic and family violence initiatives, as well as \$100,000 per annum for three years to support the Refugee Health and Wellbeing Network.

This budget again delivers an additional \$1.5 million to continue the delivery of Mental Health Support Workshops and interventions as part of the existing whole-of-Government Drought Assistance Package.

This budget supports improved integration through the recently announced Integrated Care Innovation Fund, providing \$35 million over two years aims to better integrate patient care, avoid duplicate testing and unnecessary hospitalisation.

Under the fourth direction in Advancing Health 2026, Pursuing Innovation, the budget provides an additional \$230 million over five years to facilitate essential upgrades to health facilities and supporting infrastructure across Queensland, including:

- repurposing of the Nambour General Hospital,
- redevelopment of the Atherton Hospital including the emergency department and operating theatres, and
- redevelopment of the Thursday Island Hospital
- development of a new health precinct for the southern corridor of Cairns and
- short term carpark solutions at Caboolture and Logan Hospitals.

This budget also provides an additional \$170 million to replace the Laboratory Information System and the Financial System Renewal project. These systems are critical to an efficient and effective health system.

I want to put on the record some elements contained within the budget papers about the current performance of the health system.

I am pleased that the Department of Health Service Delivery Statement makes it clear that the number of people receiving treatment within clinically-recommended time frames in Queensland's public hospitals is at record levels, despite extreme demand challenges.

79 per cent of patients attending out EDs are meeting the four-hour recommended treatment frame.

The number of Queenslanders waiting longer than clinically recommended for a specialist outpatient appointment is steadily falling down from 100,000 when we came to office to under 80,000.

The health system is also delivering elective surgery procedures with record speed.

Last financial year, 98 per cent of Category 1 and Category 3 patients received their elective surgery within clinically recommended times, as well as 94 per cent of Category 2 patients.

These results are more impressive when seen through the prism of rising demand.

Across all major categories of activity we are seeing growth that far outstrips population growth. For example, calls to Queensland Ambulance Service are up 5 per cent in the 12 months. ED presentations are up 4.5 per cent a year with category three ED presentations up 13 per cent. More Queenslanders are receiving elective surgery—up 6.5 per cent.

I now want to turn now to the impact of the budget on the electorate of Woodridge.

I'm pleased to say this Budget will improve health services for Woodridge, with the local community set to reap the benefits of a total \$8 million funding specifically for Logan Hospital.

A boosted budget of more than \$2.1 billion—an increase of 8.7 per cent on last year's operating budget—will allow Metro South Hospital and Health Service to invest \$4.9 million to establish a nine bed Clinical Decision Unit at Logan Hospital.

A further \$1.2 million will increase the number of beds at the hospital from 16 to 20 and increase staffing levels at the hospital's Paediatric Inpatient Unit.

Another \$1.9 million will boost staffing levels in the adult emergency department.

I'm also pleased to say the new Advancing Queensland's Health Infrastructure Program includes delivery of a short-term carpark solution for the Logan Hospital.

In addition, there's funding in this Budget to provide Mental Health and Allied Health related services to particular clients of Logan Community Hubs, and to deliver a range of services benefitting those in need in the Woodridge community.

This includes more than \$480,000 to non-government organisations to deliver homelessness services, and more than \$120,000 to go to registered housing providers to deliver crisis accommodation.

There is also more than \$200,000 as part of a more than \$800,000 commitment over four years to support and enhance community relations with people from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

This Budget will also directly benefit some of the youngest members of my electorate, with Crestmead and Berrinba East State Schools looking forward to receiving new and refurbished learning spaces.

There's \$500,000 of \$5.2 million set aside to construct eight additional classrooms at Crestmead State School, and a further \$1 million to refurbish the student support services teaching block to assist students with learning challenges at the school.

\$250,000 will refurbish the special support unit teaching block at Berrinba East State School.

This Budget is also delivering for the sports stars of Woodridge, with funding to upgrade local netball courts, install lighting at Logan Metro Football Club and more than \$70,000 to boost participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in structured sport and active recreation activities.

From next year, our government's Fairer Fares initiative will also mean a slash in train and bus fares for Woodridge locals.

This major overhaul of public transport costs will mean cheaper journeys for Woodridge residents heading to the CBD or Gold Coast.

Woodridge commuters travelling from Kingston station to the CBD could save almost \$900 a year, and those travelling locally from Woodridge station to Logan Central would save more than \$60.

I'm looking forward to this initiative delivering some real cost of living relief for Woodridge public transport users.

First home buyers in Woodridge are also among the winners of this year's Budget, Mr Speaker, with our government increasing the First Home Owners Grant from \$15,000 to \$20,000.

This means more Woodridge locals will be helped to achieve the dream of owning their first home sooner from as early as next month.

This is a Budget which delivers better health care for the people of our state. It is a budget that delivers for Woodridge. It is a budget that delivers for Queensland.

As Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services and as the State Member for Woodridge, I'm proud to be part of that delivery.