




Speech By
Hon. Cameron Dick

MEMBER FOR WOODRIDGE

Record of Proceedings, 12 October 2016

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Queensland Health, Annual Reports

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (2.19 pm): Just under a fortnight ago I tabled the annual reports for Queensland Health entities and a number of health related foundations. These reports reveal a state health system that is in healthy shape, delivering dividends both for Queensland patients and for Queensland taxpayers. The 2015-16 budget—the Palaszczuk's government's first budget—allocated to the health portfolio a record \$14.183 billion, an increase of \$560.6 million or 4.1 per cent on the previous year.

When we came to office we promised to restore the front-line services so savagely cut by the Newman-Nicholls LNP government, and that is what we have done. In 2015-16 we employed an additional 1,940 nurses and midwives, 651 doctors and 479 allied health professionals. Over 2,000 nursing graduates were offered a position under our Refresh Nursing initiative, and the first 47 of our nurse navigators started work. We employed an additional 115 ambulance officers and commissioned an additional 155 new or replacement ambulances.

We commenced the rollout of our digital hospital program, with Princess Alexandra Hospital in Brisbane and the Cairns hospitals going live, and we are getting results. The lists of those waiting longer than clinically recommended for a specialist outpatient appointment have fallen by over 40 per cent since we came to office. All of this has been achieved in the face of significant growth in demand.

In 2015-16 there were 1,728,443 emergency department presentations. There were 334,715 calls to 13HEALTH, the majority of which were answered within 20 seconds. The Queensland Ambulance Service received 737,803 emergency calls. The QAS also responded to 342,613 code 1 incidents. These results reflect a health system focused on delivering better outcomes for Queensland patients, and doing it in a financially prudent and responsible way.

I am pleased to advise the House that the Queensland Health annual report for 2015-16 records a surplus of \$51.1 million across the system, reflecting the benefits of careful financial management, strategic investment of surpluses and our commitment to delivering value for money to Queenslanders. Whilst we are making progress, we recognise there is more to do. I am under no illusion about the pressure we face as the Turnbull federal coalition government continues to walk away from its responsibilities to provide its fair share of funding to our state's health system. Fortunately for Queenslanders, the Palaszczuk government is committed to delivering the high-quality health services they deserve. In this year's budget we allocated \$15.274 billion, an increase of 7.7 per cent, to the health portfolio.

That is the story of the 2015-16 annual report: more doctors and nurses, more front-line services, shorter waiting lists, increased investment and a budget surplus. That is why Queenslanders understand that under the Palaszczuk government their health needs are in safe hands.