




Speech By
Peter Russo

MEMBER FOR SUNNYBANK

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ADJOURNMENT

Queensland Tissue Bank

 **Mr RUSSO** (Sunnybank—ALP) (7.03 pm): On 16 December last year the Minister for Health and I toured the Queensland Tissue Bank which operates out of a facility on Kessells Road in Coopers Plains in my electorate of Sunnybank. During our visit we had the great pleasure of hearing from the facility director, Nicholas Nuttall, the state medical director, Leo Nunnink, and the production manager, Morris Benkovich. Queensland Tissue Bank is Australia's leading producer of bone, skin and heart valve tissue. Over the past 10 years it has successfully completed over 35,000 transplants. Although it can be an uncomfortable topic of discussion, it is important to reflect on the number of lives that can be greatly improved by the donation of organs and tissue. One donor can transform the lives of 10 or more people. Because of the hard work of the Queensland Tissue Bank, Australia is a world leader in this field. In other words, Queensland is leading the way in this important area of research and expertise.

The process itself hinges on the ability of the health system to navigate a range of logistical and sensitive obstacles, all within a very limited time frame. These obstacles require a range of expertise, from discussions with family members regarding consent, to management of the waiting list, to tests on the tissue itself. A very high level of coordination will maximise the potential benefit to patients and reduce unnecessary wastage of tissue.

The reason I am bringing the Coopers Plains facility to the attention of the House is because of the centralised and highly effective way in which this particular facility operates. Queensland's rate of tissue donation is 50 per cent more than the Australian average and it is also the only state in Australia to have all donation and banking processed through a single organisation. The Queensland model has been designed for optimum quality with a single jurisdiction and a single point of donor assessment and patient management. In the coming years the Coopers Plains facility is preparing to expand its tissue operations to include demineralised bone matrix, amnion, pre-cut corneas and skin culture. Queensland's centralised model has become the benchmark for similar Australian facilities. The managers and doctors at Coopers Plains also assist with similar programs in the Northern Territory, Australian Capital Territory and Tasmania. Through their innovative approach and effective management, Queensland Tissue Bank is honouring donors by ensuring their contribution goes as far as possible to help those in need.