




Speech By
Hon. Cameron Dick

MEMBER FOR WOODRIDGE

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Sunshine Coast University Hospital; Cheverton, Mr J

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (9.51 am): On the northern access point to the Story Bridge in Brisbane there is a plaque which reads, 'This bridge was built by Queensland Workmen under the authority of the Queensland Labor Government.' The plaque provides a reminder to all who cross the bridge of two fundamental truths: the value of Queensland workers and the commitment of Labor governments to building Queensland. With that in mind, I am delighted to advise the House that Australia's newest hospital, the Sunshine Coast University Hospital, has started seeing patients this week. Approximately 1,000 outpatients have passed through the doors at the new facility, with elective surgery and new emergency department services due to commence in coming weeks. We are already seeing the impact that this facility is having on the local economy.

This is a hospital that has been worked on by so many in our Queensland community. It should never be forgotten that it was a Labor Premier that promised this hospital, it was a Labor government which properly funded the hospital and it is a Labor government that is safely commissioning and opening this hospital. Just as the Labor government transformed Brisbane through the construction of the Story Bridge, so too it is a Labor government that is transforming the Sunshine Coast through the opening of the Sunshine Coast University Hospital—a transformation that should be welcomed by those members opposite instead of being constantly criticised by LNP members on the Sunshine Coast who for years have taken the Sunshine Coast for granted.

The facility is being commissioned in a staged manner, closely and carefully managed by the Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Board and drawing on the advice of the Clinical Readiness Advisory Group and an independent commissioning expert. We will continue to do everything we can—everything we can—to avoid the mistakes that happened when the Newman LNP government commissioned and opened the Lady Cilento Children's Hospital.

In conclusion, I also wish to note the passing of Jeff Cheverton, a valued professional in primary health care and in the mental health community. Jeff had a longstanding and influential career in health and human services. He had an abiding commitment to social justice and inclusiveness for which he will be remembered. Jeff also had a terrific sense of humour. Above all, Jeff was well liked and respected by colleagues, family and friends. I acknowledge the deep sadness felt by all who knew Jeff, particularly Jeff's parents, Don and Lee, his partner, Rod, and the extended Cheverton family. Jeff had been living in Victoria prior to his passing, but he made a lasting contribution to health care in our state. On behalf of the government, I pay tribute to him today.