




Speech By
Hon. Cameron Dick

MEMBER FOR WOODRIDGE

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Winter Beds Strategy

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (9.56 am): This week's budget continues the Palaszczuk government's strong commitment to funding the front line of health care in our state. This includes allocating a further \$15 million for our 2017 Winter Beds Strategy. This funding is an important component of our strategy to arm the healthcare system for the annual challenges presented by winter, as winter is generally a time of increased presentations at our emergency departments and generally coincides with the peak influenza season in Queensland.

The seven key actions under our 2017 Winter Beds Strategy include to: provide \$15 million, including a significant investment into additional new capacity through the Mater Hospital, to support hospitals and health services most impacted by winter to implement additional targeted capacity management strategies; provide access to an extra 90 beds to provide surge capacity in areas of high demand; develop and enact annual patient flow and capacity plans, including winter bed initiatives, in all HHSs across Queensland; provide funding for dedicated nursing resources to support patient flow in our busiest EDs; continue to utilise private sector capacity through the \$20 million Surgery Connect program; continue a communication strategy and marketing plan to promote influenza vaccination for the general population and those individuals at an increased risk of complications as a result of influenza infection; and provide a quality improvement payment for staff influenza vaccination to improve voluntary influenza vaccination uptake amongst hospital and health service staff.

We also need Queenslanders to take steps to better protect themselves and their families from common winter ailments and influenza, including getting a flu shot. These steps will go a long way to decreasing the winter burden on our EDs and ensuring that our ambulance services and emergency departments remain available for those who cannot avoid it.