




Speech By
Hon. Cameron Dick

MEMBER FOR WOODRIDGE

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ADJOURNMENT

Logan, Dental Health Services

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (11.28 pm): The Palaszczuk Labor government is a government of achievement and delivery, particularly in the area of public health care. That is why, as Minister for Health, I was delighted to once again deliver for the Woodridge electorate by officially opening the \$4.3 million upgrade of the Logan Central Dental Clinic on Friday, 21 July 2017. In May this year, I cemented my commitment to improving health care in the Woodridge electorate and the City of Logan with the launch of the Community Health Action Plan for Logan. The plan came out of a local health symposium that agreed to develop an action plan to help narrow the significant gap in health outcomes between Logan City and other areas of the state.

Dental is one of the plan's six priorities, with a strong focus on children. As a father and as a resident of the Woodridge electorate, I am passionate about improving the health care of our kids. The Logan Central Dental Clinic has expanded from five dental chairs to 15 dental chairs. The clinic's capacity will increase by 15,000 new dental appointments each year. One of the new dental chairs is for bariatric clients, that is, patients who are overweight or obese. That will allow more clients to access dental treatment closer to home, instead of having to travel to the QEII Hospital clinic at Coopers Plains. A three-dimensional dental X-ray machine is also now available. This means patients can have their X-rays done in Logan Central during their appointment, saving them a trip to another clinic.

However, the expansion is not the only cause for celebration. For the first time, the Logan Central Oral Health Centre has opened its doors to children after providing dental care to adults for many years. Adults and children can now receive care at the same clinic and even during the same appointment, making it easier and more convenient for families to improve dental health. However, to make a real difference we cannot simply treat tooth decay; we must prevent it.

The Palaszczuk Labor government has also funded the expansion of the school toothbrushing program for children in prep and year 1 in Logan. I had the privilege of seeing the program in action when I brushed my teeth with Woodridge State School prep students last Friday. This program has already had an impact, with a 10 per cent reduction in cavities recorded at schools participating in the toothbrushing program, compared to those that are not. This program will be rolled out to all schools in Logan.

Another new program, the Healthy Mouth Day program, is now in place at all Logan schools. It involves screening children for decay, education, fluoride application and a free toothbrush and toothpaste. Children with decay are referred for further treatment. So far this year, more than 2,400 children have been screened in the Metro South region.

Another successful collaboration being funded is the Lift the Lip program, which aims to reduce tooth decay in our youngest community members. Child health nurses have been trained to identify dental disease in children during their health checks and can refer children directly for dental treatment.

To date, more than 3,700 children have been referred for free dental treatment by child health nurses in the Metro South health region. I am confident that these programs, together with the expanded Logan Central Oral Health Centre and the hard work of our oral health nurses and clinicians, will make a real difference to the health of our Logan community.