




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR IPSWICH

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ADJOURNMENT

Yates, Mr Tom, Retirement

 **Ms HOWARD** (Ipswich—ALP) (2.35 am): I rise to speak in honour of Tom Yates. Tom recently announced his retirement as CEO of the Ipswich Hospital Foundation after 17 years of outstanding service to the organisation. Tom and his wife Susan and daughter Isabelle moved to South-East Queensland in August 1998—almost 20 years ago—after spending more than two decades working in international relief and development programs encompassing the globe from South East Asia, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Sudan, Egypt, the Balkans and Indonesia and East Timor. This rich life results in some great dinner party conversations and I personally have learned a lot of the challenges many people are facing globally through listening to their stories.

Tom has said that, after having lived in those communities, arriving in Ipswich was a welcome change. I think I can speak on behalf of numerous Ipswich people when I state that we have been very fortunate to have the Yates family living, working and playing in our community. Since taking on the role of CEO of the Ipswich Hospital Foundation, Tom has guided the organisation through many triumphs, changes and growth. A Catholic priest in the sixties and seventies in Berkeley, California, Tom has a unique ability to provide leadership with vision, strength and energy as well as with great humility. Under his leadership the Ipswich Hospital Foundation implemented the Ipswich Park2Park fun run, now an institution integral to the identity of the Ipswich community. Tom is also responsible for the construction of the Ipswich Hospital's renal unit—literally a life saver for many Ipswich people.

With eight board members and nine staff, the Ipswich Hospital Foundation is dedicated to supporting the community's health services and promoting healthy lifestyles to Ipswich people. We all know that rates of chronic diseases are increasing exponentially and many of them are preventable through lifestyle choices. The Ipswich Hospital Foundation has been committed to raising awareness of this because it wants to reverse the trend of increasing rates of obesity, heart disease, stroke and type 2 diabetes to name a few of the preventable chronic diseases placing an enormous burden on our health system.

The Ipswich Hospital Foundation has collected countless donations, innovations and staff development grants for the West Moreton Health and Hospital Service. All of this has happened under Tom's inspiring leadership. Under Tom's guidance, we saw the publication of *Healthy Living Ipswich* which goes to every household—around 65,000—in the Ipswich area. This publication is well received and provides practical and relevant articles and stories about health. Tom developed the health screening and goal setting program SNAP—Screening, Nutrition and Activity Program—which was extremely popular, as was his Sun Protection for Health free sunscreen programs.

Tom Yates is a role model to all men, adored by his family and extremely well liked and respected by all who know him. I thank him sincerely for his contribution and wish him well in his retirement.