



Speech By  
**Mark Boothman**

**MEMBER FOR ALBERT**

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### **PUBLIC HEALTH (INFECTION CONTROL) AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mr BOOTHMAN** (Albert—LNP) (7.40 pm): I rise to make a short contribution to the Public Health (Infection Control) Amendment Bill 2017. Before I start, I promised Chris, who is a good friend of mine and a waiter at the Ashmore Seafood and Steakhouse, I would pass on his comments. I have known Chris for many years. He was very proud of his local dentist. His local dentist happened to be John-Paul Langbroek.

**Mr Langbroek:** The maitre d'.

**Mr BOOTHMAN:** Chris has a very nice shining set of pearlys, one could say. He was very upset when Mr Langbroek decided to go into politics because he had to find a new dentist. He put a lot of trust in Mr Langbroek. We used to have some very interesting political debates, but I can say that he does vote for the member for Surfers Paradise, although he did say that if the member ever has a life after politics he should go back to dentistry because he needs his teeth done.

We place an enormous amount of trust in our healthcare providers and we expect the highest standards. When we hear about breaches in healthcare practices, it sends shock waves through our communities and creates a high level of fear. There is nothing more important than having good health care and the ease of which it is available. After all, we have one body and we must do our utmost to protect it.

Upon the news of a forced closure of a dental clinic at Carina due to concerns over sterilisation practices, multiple residents in my region contacted my office expressing their concerns and shock. As one resident put it, how can this happen in the modern age of medicine? The Chief Health Officer, Dr Young, said that issues at the clinic were about inadequate infection control practices against standards. There was no suggestion or indication that a person had contracted any infectious or transmissible disease, but the standards were not met. The failure of infection control procedures potentially exposed more than 4,000 patients to hepatitis C. Having said that, the Australian Dental Association has stated that this type of breach is rare, so this is not to create panic out there.

The bill incorporates appropriate adjustment to the regulation-making head of power in the act. This is supported by the amendments in the Public Health Regulation 2005 that will allow mandatory training in infection control standards which will be prescribed in the regulation. Unfortunately, these changes are not detailed in the brief. Therefore, there are some concerns about how they will impact the department and businesses.

The second part of the bill will enhance the ability of the department to monitor the compliance of healthcare providers to ensure their infection control obligations and, if necessary, investigate possible breaches. It should be noted that the Queensland Branch of the Australian Dental Association raised the issue of the limited right of appeal for affected businesses. As already stated, the shadow minister will be moving an amendment to provide a right to appeal a decision to the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal.

The third part of the bill will enhance the ability of Queensland Health to ensure compliance of operators with infection control frameworks and prosecute any breaches. I agree with the shadow minister that there does need to be some tweaking around this but that, overall, the bill is fundamentally good.