



Speech By  
**Charis Mullen**


**MEMBER FOR JORDAN**

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## ADJOURNMENT

### Community Hubs

 **Mrs MULLEN** (Jordan—ALP) (6.03 pm): It was my absolute pleasure to recently represent the Queensland health minister at the launch of Ipswich Community Hubs. Auspiced through Community Hubs Australia and in partnership with Access, the five community hubs are based at Fernbrooke State School, Redbank Plains State School, Riverview State School, Staines Memorial College and WoodLinks State School. Community hubs serve as an entry point to connect new arrivals and migrant families with each other, their school and existing services. The hubs provide the opportunity to gain information, learn life skills, build confidence, meet key people and connect with other new arrivals in a safe place. In particular, the hubs assist with navigating Australian culture and systems including housing, health, legal, education and employment. They also help with building English language skills and confidence and support the learning, development and wellbeing of newly arrived youth and connect them with the appropriate services.

Dozens of community hubs operate under the National Community Hubs Program, which is recognised as a leading model to engage and support migrant women with young children. The focus on migrant women is important, as many migrant women can spend most of their time at home isolated from the rest of the community. Some migrant women cannot drive; some have limited public transport access; many have young children and cannot access childminding. As a result, they can miss out on available services to learn or receive health support. It also means that many of the children can arrive at school without having much, if any, English language or social skills. The hubs can provide early intervention for these young children, whether through the need to have hearing checked, speech therapy provided or behavioural concerns addressed.

I took the opportunity to visit one of the hubs at Staines Memorial College to get a firsthand look at the invaluable work the hubs provide. Meeting with the hub coordinator, Alek Arok, I was invited to sit in on a sewing class that was held for some of the local mothers. Speaking with them it was very clear that the class was more than about learning to sew but a way to meet other mothers and to have a chat and a laugh—to connect. It is a testament to the wonderful Ipswich community that organisations such as Zonta Club of Ipswich have taken the initiative to support the sewing classes through donations of fabric and hands-on teaching. I was particularly heartened by the enthusiasm of Staines Memorial College in supporting the community hub. I would like to commend the principal, Mr Norton Sands, for understanding not only the importance of this project for his school community but also the broader Ipswich community. In fact, I would like to commend all of the principals whose schools are participating in the community hubs program.

My mother's family arrived in this country in the 1950s following displacement in their home country. This is an issue that is personal for me. I wish that my mother's family could have had the type of support that the community hubs are offering our newly arrived community members. It is a program that I am pleased to support and a model I will continue to champion.