



Speech By  
**Jennifer Howard**


**MEMBER FOR IPSWICH**

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**MOTION**

**Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services**

 **Ms HOWARD** (Ipswich—ALP) (5.15 pm): It gives me a lot of pleasure to stand and talk about Labor's investment in new and improved hospitals and in particular the Ipswich Hospital. The Palaszczuk government is continuing to make significant investments in health facilities right across the state. This year's budget delivered on our \$679 million investment in our Building Better Hospitals program. It includes funding of \$281.2 million for the Logan Hospital redevelopment, which will deliver up to 192 additional beds, as well as \$12.6 million for the Logan Hospital maternity services project. We are also investing \$252.7 million in the Caboolture Hospital redevelopment, which will deliver 130 additional beds.

The Palaszczuk government has also delivered \$124.5 million for stage 1A of the Ipswich Hospital expansion. This expansion will deliver a new mental health unit, an MRI suite to grow clinical capacity, and an integrated community healthcare centre and outpatient facility. The new 50-bed mental health building will replace an ageing facility and create an additional six beds to provide a purpose-built centre for acute mental health care for adults and seniors. The addition of an MRI machine means Ipswich Hospital will no longer need to send patients to other hospitals for MRI examinations. That means outpatients will have greater options to receive care closer to home and inpatients will have ready access to imaging that will accelerate clinical pathways and allow patients to go home sooner.

The LNP want to criticise the Palaszczuk government for investing \$124.5 million in the health needs of Ipswich. The LNP would not know anything about health infrastructure. From their time in government they would have us think that we could cut healthcare workers and still be able to provide quality health care to a rapidly growing population. The LNP did not make a single election commitment to rebuild a single new hospital or health facility. The LNP opposed the Ipswich Hospital redevelopment prior to the election, so to have them now say that the hospital upgrade is not big enough is unfortunately typical of the hypocrisy we have come to expect from this mob. They want to criticise this important upgrade because it provides six new beds in a fully redeveloped 50-bed unit.

Hospitals are not just beds. A modern, 21st century hospital provides a broad range of clinical services: surgery, outpatient services, emergency care, acute mental health services, maternity care, palliative care, interhospital transfers, and specialist clinical procedures such as MRI imaging, dialysis and radiography services. They provide treatment spaces, nurses' work stations, kitchens and car parks. Redeveloping a hospital requires considering all these needs and often performing the redevelopment in stages. That is what is planned for our hospital in Ipswich. In fact, that is why it is called stage 1A.

The \$124.4 million for Ipswich Hospital's redevelopment is on top of the \$128 million that the Bligh Labor government committed in 2010 for the major expansion of the Ipswich Hospital, which promised 90 new beds for the hospital, a doubling in size of the emergency department, a short-stay surgery section, and a separate waiting area for children and their families.

This expansion was fully funded by the Bligh Labor government, yet the Newman government was happy to cut the ribbon at the opening of that expansion and take credit for a Labor funded investment—proof that those opposite can only cut things. They did this while at the same time cutting thousands of Queensland Health jobs. When the LNP got into government in 2012 they did not waste time sacking 4,400 health jobs, including 1,400 nurses, 700 allied health professionals and 50 doctors. The LNP cut \$21 million from the West Moreton Hospital and Health Service budget in their first term and sacked 84 staff. People in Ipswich still remember.

In an especially callous manoeuvre the Newman LNP government closed the doors of the Barrett Adolescent Centre, leaving young patients bereft of any other alternative mental health services. Cutting health services and sacking front-line healthcare workers is just toying with people's lives, but the LNP called it efficiency. Only a Palaszczuk Labor government has the vision to plan, build and expand hospitals to accommodate our growing population. Our Building Better Hospitals Program includes \$3 million to commence planning and development of a business case for the Wide Bay and Burnett region.

During the recent governing from the regions program in Toowoomba, the Premier and Minister for Health announced that Baillie Henderson is the preferred site for a new Toowoomba hospital and \$9 million will be provided for the detailed design phase—proof that this government invests in health.

*(Time expired)*