




Speech By
Hon. Dr Steven Miles
MEMBER FOR MURRUMBA

Record of Proceedings, 22 August 2018

APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL; APPROPRIATION BILL

Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee, Report

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (4.07 pm): I welcome the tabling of the Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee report into the proposed budget appropriations for 2018-19. I acknowledge the committee's recommendation that the proposed expenditure as detailed in the budget bills be agreed to without amendment. I appreciate the committee understands there are challenges facing our health system: a population that is ageing, that has lower levels of healthy weight and higher levels of chronic disease and increasing levels of disability, not to mention the difficulty of the Turnbull government cutting and withholding funds from Queensland's hospitals.

We are a big state. More than 50 per cent of our population lives outside of our capital metropolitan area. The Palaszczuk government believes that all Queenslanders, no matter who they are, what they do or where they are from, deserve the best possible health care. We know the importance of public health care and we are resourcing it accordingly. The total budget for Queensland Health this year is \$18.3 billion, up more than \$798 million on the year before. That includes \$985.5 million for new and improved health infrastructure. We are a government that builds infrastructure that employs people and that puts the needs of Queenslanders first.

There were more than 1.93 million emergency department presentations in 2017-18, up from 1.87 million the previous year. Category 1 to 3 presentations, the most serious, increased over seven per cent. Despite that demand, a record number of people received treatment within clinically recommended times. Ninety-nine per cent of category 1 patients were seen by a clinician within two minutes of their arrival at an emergency department. In total, more than 76 per cent of all presentations were completed within four hours.

The statement of reservations from the opposition members is not really worth addressing in significant detail, but there is one matter on which the statement is irresponsibly misleading. The statement of reservations concerns itself substantially with procedural matters, including who got to answer which questions when and which non-government members of the committee spent more time on camera asking questions.

I note the analysis from the committee chair demonstrating that opposition members got proportionally much more time and asked many more questions. However, in their statement, members opposite made a claim that they know to be untrue. They claimed that cancerous tissue was used for cardiac surgery in four patients. That is incorrect. There is no evidence that cancerous tissue was transplanted into any patient. That suggestion simply should not be made, especially not by people briefed in great detail on the matter. I implore honourable members to correct the record.

At the hearing, from her very first question the member for Mudgeeraba tried to claim that Queensland's health system is in crisis, talking down the efforts of our hardworking doctors, nurses, midwives, health professionals and their support staff, trying to scar Queenslanders into believing they and their families cannot trust their local public hospital. No family deserves that unwarranted angst just so that the member for Mudgeeraba can score cheap political points.

The Palaszczuk government has made health a priority from the moment we came to government in 2015. We have rebuilt the health system and its workforce after it was decimated by the LNP. We will continue to support Queensland Health workers by making sure that they have what they need to take care of Queenslanders when they need it most.