




Speech By
Hon. Dr Steven Miles

MEMBER FOR MURRUMBA

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Toowoomba, Health Services; Queensland Health, Payroll Deductions

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (9.43 am): Queensland is one of the safest places in world to give birth. By June 2019 we will have delivered on our election commitment of employing 100 new midwives across all parts of the state. Forty-two will work in rural and regional Queensland. Many of our hospital and health services have also introduced midwifery group practice continuity of care models. These are providing quality, consistent care to women in remote areas. I have also recently established a rural maternity task force. Part of the process for the task force will include visiting rural areas to meet with community members and front-line clinicians.

I am pleased to inform the House about a new, innovative model of care being used in the Darling Downs region to benefit mums and bubs and our future midwives. Toowoomba Hospital has joined with Griffith University to offer student led antenatal clinics, a first for the regional facility. These clinics will help to give practical experience to the next generation of midwives and give them a taste of what it is like to work in a regional hospital. They are also really beneficial to expectant mothers.

Women who receive their antenatal care through this model see the same student midwife right through their pregnancy, labour and birth and transition to motherhood. The clinic is also held after usual business hours, which means more women can attend after work and they are able to bring their partner or support person to the appointment. We are doing everything we can to support our rural and remote clinicians and continue delivering great outcomes for mums and babies.

That is not all we are delivering in health care in the Toowoomba region. The Palaszczuk government is investing a record \$801 million in health care in the Darling Downs region this financial year. This includes a \$15.9 million growth funding boost to help our hardworking doctors and nurses meet the growing demand for services, including 31 new beds at Toowoomba Hospital. On this side of House, we believe that no matter where people live in the Darling Downs region they will have access to high-quality health care. I am looking forward to visiting Toowoomba once again next week.

Like most employers, Queensland Health facilitates payroll deductions on behalf of their employees to charities, unions, health funds and other organisations. Since 2009 Queensland Health has facilitated donations to Australian People for Humanitarian, Educational and Development Abroad, which is a charity registered by the Commonwealth government and a foreign aid organisation registered and funded by DFAT. That arrangement has continued under both Labor and LNP governments. Registration of charities is a responsibility of the federal government not Queensland Health.