




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR KEPPEL

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MATTER OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Rockhampton, Ice Rehabilitation and Treatment Facility

 **Mrs LAUGA** (Keppel—ALP) (2.11 pm): Addiction is a disease that does not discriminate in the people it affects. I have been fighting for years for an ice, alcohol and other drugs detox and rehabilitation facility in Rockhampton to treat patients suffering from addiction.

My fight for a facility started years ago when I first met parents and grandparents at an Ice Affecting Families Capricorn Coast support meeting. I later introduced the Premier, Annastacia Palaszczuk, to several of the women from the group at a meeting with them, and the Premier subsequently held Queensland's first ice summit in Rockhampton in 2017. It was at that summit where we heard from hundreds of participants about the need for an ice, alcohol and other drugs detox and rehabilitation facility in Central Queensland. It was the most important issue raised by participants at the summit.

Addiction is insidious and it affects every street and neighbourhood in our country. According to the National Ice Action Strategy, it takes seven years on average for an ice user to decide that it is time to get clean. When a person makes the decision to get treatment for any type of addiction, it is absolutely essential that they can get help at a local facility with doctors, nurses and trained professional staff close to their family and support networks.

Proportionally, Australians use methamphetamine—including ice—more than almost any other country in the world, and the number of users continues to grow. As ice use increases, so too does its impact on individuals, families and the community. I have friends and family who suffer from addiction and I have spoken personally to hundreds of local people who have told me just how badly we need a detox and rehabilitation facility in our region to help their loved ones.

People have shared with me from their own life stories how addiction grips their entire life. When someone decides they want to get better they need the right support for their recovery straightaway—before the moment is lost. Imagine being a mum who has watched their child be eaten away by ice for four, five, six or even more years and when you think it cannot get any worse that child says to you, 'Mum, I'm done. I want help. I need to get help.' That is the critical moment when having a facility like this will make all the difference.

We are building this rehabilitation facility so that when the time comes there is help available—close to home and support networks, with doctors, nurses and trained professional staff. Our Central Queensland community desperately needs this facility.

Whilst the LNP and One Nation are using this important health facility to make a political storm, I make no apologies for fighting for health services to improve the lives of people in our region. I am incredibly disappointed with the way in which the LNP and One Nation have turned this proposed new detox and rehabilitation centre into a political grandstanding opportunity rather than giving their support to a much needed community health facility.

Only the Palaszczuk Labor government went to the last state election committing to a detox and rehabilitation centre in Central Queensland. No other party or candidate has ever committed to a facility like this in Central Queensland. Only Labor will deliver this facility in Rockhampton.

Opposition members interjected.

Mrs LAUGA: If those opposite were interested in listening to how this facility is being delivered, that would be great. I can report that work is underway to deliver the new Rockhampton residential detox and rehabilitation facility, and that work is progressing. Reopened negotiations are underway with the Rockhampton Regional Council to settle on land at the rear of the Music Bowl site. The details are being finalised and a revised business case is being developed.

Following the public meeting in Rockhampton and council's subsequent announcement that Queensland Health's preferred site at the Music Bowl was a viable option again, we have been progressing our design for the Music Bowl and the required infrastructure works. As the government committed in Rockhampton, there has been no further work on the Birkbeck Drive site, and Queensland Health have also undertaken initial assessments of the potential suitability of alternative sites proposed by some of the people who attended that meeting.

The Music Bowl was Queensland Health's preferred option, and now that the Rockhampton Regional Council is on board the government is working hard to progress this site as quickly as possible. I want to assure everyone that all parties involved are genuinely working hard to make the Music Bowl site viable. Queensland Health has also given the commitment to consult with the community about this proposed site.

I will not stop until I have delivered this important health facility for our community so that people in our community can get the treatment that they need. I would encourage all of those opposite to get on board and support this much needed facility in our community.

Opposition members interjected.

Mrs LAUGA: You would not know that they support it based on everything that has happened. I am working hard to deliver this facility and our community needs it.