




Speech By
Christopher Whiting

MEMBER FOR BANCROFT

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MATTER OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Budget, Health

 **Mr WHITING** (Bancroft—ALP) (2.32 pm): It is rather edifying to endure a five-minute lecture on integrity from the member for Kawana. May I remind the House that this is someone who saw fit to slug Queensland taxpayers \$15,000 in order to charter two helicopters to visit a youth justice boot camp. This is the same member who oversaw a boot camp blow-out of \$16.7 million that had no effect on recidivism. It is the same member who as attorney-general sacked the PCMC over their handling of the Ken Levy affair and was sent into hiding during the 2015 election so we could forget about his particular brand of integrity for the LNP. After that edifying lecture, I am going to talk about something more positive—that is, what a record health budget will deliver for Queenslanders in my electorate of Bancroft.

The three opposition speakers in this debate whinged and whined about properties and the right thing to do, but I want to talk about what really matters to the people in Bancroft—that is, providing a health system that is first class and reliable with great staff and hospitals. The Palaszczuk government is in the midst of a nearly half a billion dollar massive reconstruction of the Redcliffe and Caboolture hospitals. These are our local hospitals. I know that our residents are much more interested in finding out what is happening in the health system and what we are delivering through a \$19.2 billion investment where we can treat more people, build more hospitals and strengthen frontline services as well.

Let me tell the House about the Redcliffe Hospital and the \$114 million refurbishment and redevelopment. This includes a \$4 million maternity package, with a new maternity ward, a special care nursery, a new paediatric ward and birthing suites; \$9.5 million for the installation of a new day surgery ward and a sterilisation facility; \$8 million to build new cancer care and kidney dialysis facilities; \$5.5 million to build an extra operating theatre; and \$6.8 million to redo the electrical system and reinstall 30 kilometres of cabling to make sure that hospital is secure.

There is also a massive redevelopment at Caboolture Hospital. This is a \$352.9 million redevelopment with a new four-storey clinical services building that will introduce these new services to the Caboolture Hospital: a 20-bed rehabilitation unit and a 10-bed palliative care unit; expansions to the emergency department; a special care nursery; an intensive care unit; and the list goes on. The expansion of the emergency department will obviously get some of the most traction with local residents. That is a \$4.8 million project to double the size of the hospital's emergency department to deliver 18 new treatment spaces, refurbishment of the existing waiting area, three new assessment rooms, a dedicated mental health assessment area and a dedicated paediatric assessment area. This is on top of what we have already delivered, including a new 300-space graded car park, a new outpatient services building and a new state-of-the-art medical imaging facility delivered with a private provider.

One of the biggest things that people get excited about is what we are doing with the car parks at our local hospitals at Redcliffe and Caboolture. A \$46 million multistorey car park is being built at Caboolture Hospital. Once that is complete, more than 1,600 car parking spaces will be available on

site, which is a net increase of 500 spaces. Let us look at what is happening with the Redcliffe car park. Construction of the car park on the corner of Anzac Avenue will start very soon and will take 12 months to build. That will create 603 car parking spaces at a cost of \$36 million. The good thing about that is that it will be owned and operated by Queensland Health, and there will be affordable daily parking rates with a maximum car parking charge of \$15 a day.

We are not just investing in these massive programs to build the better hospital systems for our local residents; we are also investing in the people—the workers—inside these hospitals. For example, we are putting on new midwives at both the Redcliffe and Caboolture hospitals. There will be six new midwife positions at Redcliffe and two at Caboolture. There were 1,700 babies born in the Redcliffe Hospital last year and 1,900 were born at Caboolture. These midwife positions are part of the overall investment that we are providing to Queenslanders, with 3,500 additional nurses and midwives by 2020. These are the things that people in my area are really interested in, and that is what they want to hear—that we are delivering a better health service.