




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR MANSFIELD

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HEALTH AND WELLBEING QUEENSLAND BILL

 **Ms McMillan** (Mansfield—ALP) (12.19 pm): I rise to contribute to the Health and Wellbeing Queensland Bill 2019. The World Health Organization outlines the social determinants of health as the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age. These circumstances are shaped by the distribution of money, power and resources at global, national and local levels. The social determinants of health are mostly responsible for health inequities, the unfair and avoidable differences in health status seen within and between countries. I relish the opportunity to experience the research carried out by the OECD in France in 2017 which supports the approach of the World Health Organization. We know that our most disadvantaged groups within our community often experience the worst health outcomes, and research suggests that the greater the privilege the better the health outcomes.

Studying to be a health educator during the early 1990s, the research is clear—that society could not rely on the medical model of health alone. The social model of health provides a significant framework for preventing community health issues and promoting the health of individuals, families and communities. I congratulate our minister and our government for this initiative and the proactive approach to addressing some of the most significant lifestyle factors that affect Queenslanders. Queenslanders understand that there is only one party that understands the complexity of an individual's health and wellbeing.

The objective of the bill is to establish a health promotion agency to be known as Health and Wellbeing Queensland as a statutory body. HWQ will contribute, as others have suggested, to improve the health and wellbeing of Queenslanders, reduce the risk factors associated with chronic disease and reduce health inequities. I enjoyed my years leading the schools under the Bligh government. As a graduate of physical and health education, I welcomed the introduction of the red, amber and green light food choices and the associated decision-making model. I led my P&C at the time through the associated change, including banning sugary drinks and each year allowing a minimum number of red days in our school community. I witnessed firsthand the impact that this policy had on the health of my school community. The students and I often discussed how powerful it would be if we as a government were able to place spoons on labels indicating the amount of sugar a product contains. Perhaps, students, this may now come to fruition.

The community I led managed this initiative well with minor impact on the profits of the school P&C, so it can be done. Introducing the statutory body Health and Wellbeing Queensland will assist our government to address innovatively the leading social determinants of health associated with obesity, being overweight, and other unhealthy behaviours including the early years of development, education, employment and working conditions, housing and access to and use of health services. For example, education provides the development of knowledge and skills for problem solving and greater control over life circumstances. Education also increases an individual's work opportunities, security, satisfaction and income, all of which are foundations of good health and wellbeing.

I take this opportunity to acknowledge the chair of our Brisbane South HHS, Janine Walker, and her staff on the innovative work they engage in to assist my community to understand health literacy. Health literacy is emerging as a considerable factor in influencing people's decision-making around food particularly. I commend the work that Brisbane South HHS is engaging in. I commend this bill to the House.