




Speech By
Dale Last

MEMBER FOR BURDEKIN

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PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Tata, Dr S; Regional Queensland, Health Services

 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (2.42 pm): In my experience, people who strive for their absolute best more often than not achieve it. I am pleased to inform the House that the Burdekin electorate has yet another resident who has achieved excellence and that Home Hill is now officially home to Queensland's best GP. As well as great news for Home Hill, this award is also great news for all of regional Queensland because it proves that there is a solution to our doctor crisis.

Just over 12 months ago, I met Dr Sarat Tata who had big plans to drastically improve access to health care in Home Hill. Not only did he want to offer new services like pathology and a visiting dentist, he wanted to grow his practice from a one-doctor practice to a three-doctor practice—and what a difference that makes in a small town. In many towns in my electorate, the only doctor is a locum and in others we desperately need more doctors. Both Minister Miles and his federal counterpart are fully aware that the system is broken and that we need to work together to find a solution. Perhaps we need to start by focusing on the positives of being a doctor in a small town like Home Hill.

Dr Tata is a perfect example of what happens when a GP and a community work together. His practice has expanded by 600 patients. A matter of great pride for Dr Tata and his colleagues is the continuity and standard of care they offer and the wide range of ailments they treat. The surgery has become a source of enormous pride in the Burdekin, and in particular the Home Hill community. It is testament to what you can achieve with a bit of vision, commitment, belief and hard work. Rural and regional Queensland offers great opportunities for doctors. An expanding practice, a new surgery, being named North Queensland's best GP and then being named the state's best GP in just over 12 months proves that without a doubt.

Regardless of where we live, I am sure we can all agree that rural communities deserve access to First World medical services. I call on all members to join me in congratulating Dr Tata on his outstanding achievements and to commit to working together to ensure the delivery of health services to regional Queensland. I am confident that, if we can display just a portion of the dedication, commitment and compassion that Dr Tata and his fellow doctors—Dr Satya and Dr Ram—show to their community, we can achieve a health system that treats all Queenslanders equally no matter where they live.

It is imperative that each and every one of us in this chamber commit to providing health services right across rural and regional Queensland. Those people who live in those rural areas go there for a reason. One of those reasons is health care and a second reason is education. If we do not provide those services, we are not going to attract residents to those communities.