




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR GREENSLOPES

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HEALTH AND WELLBEING QUEENSLAND BILL

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (12.29 pm): When it comes to this bill, I am going to start by quoting the late great 'Big Kev': 'I'm excited!' This is a great bill and I can say that on behalf of all healthcare professionals, except for those who voted against safe nurse-to-patient ratios. We support this bill. It is a great step forward for health in this state.

I know that I am pretty biased—I am a nurse—but we have done a pretty good job in terms of delivering improved health care not just in our state but in our country. We have made huge inroads into dealing with things that were causing widespread premature death in the last century. Most of those things these days would be considered preventable. Maternal and neonatal survival rates are high thanks to the excellent work of midwives. I give a shout out to midwives for the International Day of the Midwife, which is coming up. Thanks to vaccinations, public sanitation, clean water and improved access to food, the majority of people now reach the age of five and then go on to live a healthy life.

We have made huge inroads into dealing with infectious diseases caused by bacteria, viruses and poor living conditions. People arrive healthy, stay healthy and live longer, but—and there is a big 'but'—people are still dying prematurely of preventable diseases. One of our key current health challenges is diseases caused by the lifestyle choices that people make. There is much work to be done to promote health and to prevent disease.

There is already so much happening in this space, particularly in the electorate of Greenslopes: the parkrun every Saturday morning; the Stroke Foundation coming out to do the big BP check every year; the Heart Foundation walking groups every week; school tuckshops adopting the traffic light system for food; a local hairdresser running a mental health first aid program for her staff; the Deadly Choices touch carnival; the BreastScreen Queensland service in Coorparoo; PPP parenting courses—the list goes on and on. These activities cut across sectors—public, private, health and non-health. Some of it is delivered by health professionals but much of it is not. Think of the parent who when packing a school lunch chooses healthy food options for their kids. That is an exercise in preventable health. A lot of it is delivered not by health professionals but by people like that—families who gain knowledge to make healthy choices.

Talk to anybody who works for the great health promotion organisations. It was great to have both the Heart Foundation and the Stroke Foundation in here earlier this week—and I thank all members for supporting that event. There is much work already going on, but there is a need for coordination across the various sectors. There is a need for coordination of activities not just in the health system but beyond the health system as well. There is a need to develop a strategic plan and there is a need to identify gaps and respond to them.

I have spoken many times in this House about the social determinants of health, and the health literature is really clear on this matter. I would like to again refer to Dr Michael Marmot, who has done an excellent job over decades and decades of researching and documenting research into social

determinants of health. The evidence is clear: where you live, how much you earn, the type of house you live in, your gender, your ethnicity, your sexuality and the level of education you attain will all have an impact on your health outcomes.

We know that people who are Indigenous, people who live in remote areas and people who live in socially disadvantaged communities have significantly higher rates of lifestyle related chronic conditions. We know that we need health promotion strategies that target people who are Indigenous, people who live in remote communities and people who live in socially disadvantaged areas. Think of the Deadly Choices program. What a great example of one of these programs.

Dealing with diseases caused by lifestyle choices involves not just changing the individual but changing society. These types of changes only occur over a very long period of time. Think about the 50-plus years our society has been attempting to reduce smoking rates. When health promotion and acute care services are managed under the same budget, it is natural for the disease that we can see and cure now to receive funding priority over programs that have broad aims and are hard to demonstrate short-term outcomes particularly that fit in with the political cycle.

I support this bill and the establishment of the Health and Wellbeing Queensland statutory authority because it deals with many of the issues that I have just outlined in this speech. The authority will prioritise health promotion. It will be independent and have a separate budget. It has set real and positive targets—a 10 per cent increase in Queenslanders with a healthy body weight. That will have significant economic benefits for this state beyond the significant benefits for the individuals who manage to achieve that. It will focus on the social determinants of health, particularly for people who are Indigenous, for people who live in remote areas and for people who live in socially disadvantaged communities. It will coordinate activities across and beyond the health sector. It will encourage collaboration, and it will enhance the existing culture of evidence based practice in the area of health promotion.

I could stand here and stray from the long title of the bill and talk about nurses who did not vote for safe nurse-to-patient ratios and the wrong priorities of the LNP in cutting services and sacking nurses, but I will not do that. I will stick to the long title of the bill. I support the bill because by doing these things Health and Wellbeing Queensland will contribute to the social change that we need for all Queenslanders to reduce their risk factors of chronic disease and to reduce health inequity.

The committee has done an excellent job. I commend the chair and all of the submitters. It was one of the best reports that I have read. I would encourage all members of the House to take the time to read this report. They will increase their knowledge about health promotion exponentially. This is a really important step forward in delivering better health outcomes for all Queenslanders. I commend the bill to the House.