




Speech By
Hon. Dr Steven Miles
MEMBER FOR MURRUMBA

Record of Proceedings, 27 February 2019

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Health System; Nursing and Midwifery Workforce

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (9.49 am): Yesterday afternoon the member for Mudgeeraba raised a series of very serious allegations. I want to assure the House that all materials tabled have been referred to the Queensland Health Metro North Integrity Unit for investigation and referral to appropriate bodies. I will not be making any comment that could jeopardise that investigation. I strongly urge anyone with evidence of misconduct to contact the integrity unit of their hospital and health service.

More than four years ago the Palaszczuk government made a promise to strengthen and support our nursing and midwifery workforce in Queensland. We said that we would hire more nurses and midwives and make graduate—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Dr Robinson interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Oodgeroo, you are warned under the standing orders. I called the House to order.

Dr MILES: We said that we would hire more nurses and midwives and make more graduate positions available. We said that we would legislate for safe minimum nurse-to-patient ratios to look after both our nurses and our patients and we committed to hiring nurse navigators to help patients find their way through the modern health system, and we are doing all of those things. We have employed more than 6,189 full-time-equivalent nurses and midwives to take care of sick Queenslanders and we have employed 236 full-time-equivalent nurse navigators across the system. We also passed legislation to make minimum nurse-to-patient ratios mandatory in designated adult acute medical, adult acute surgical and two adult acute mental health wards in Queensland's public hospitals. The law came into effect from 1 July 2016, and since March 2017 the statewide compliance rate for those ratios has been 100 per cent.

International research in 30 other countries has shown that investing in nurses improves patient outcomes and improves hospital safety. We are also finding ways to better support our graduates working in rural and remote areas. Through our Refresh Nursing guarantee, the RSQ education support program is a two-year program that provides seven-day-a-week support. In the 18 months to December 2018, the program has now trained more than 5,290 attendees across 678 sessions. The training covers a wide range of topics and areas of practice including triage, anaphylaxis, drowning, electrocution, sepsis, traumatic eye injuries, preparing patients for retrieval, care of the critically ill and more. It is so successful that this training model is being sought after not just by nurses and midwives but by allied health workers such as doctors, paramedics and administrators. The Palaszczuk government is employing, training, protecting and supporting our nurses and midwives because we highly value them and the hard work that they do for the health of the people of Queensland.