




Speech By
Hon. Dr Steven Miles

MEMBER FOR MURRUMBA

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Hospitals, Demand

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (9.52 am): Queensland hospitals are treating a record number of patients across the state and saving a record number of lives. Between July 2018 and March 2019, Queensland hospitals saw 1.5 million Queenslanders in their emergency departments. That is the equivalent of the populations of the Gold Coast, the Sunshine Coast, Cairns, Townsville, Mackay, Rockhampton, Gladstone, Hervey Bay and Maryborough combined. Just last month the state's emergency physicians saw a total of 178,573 patients, which is an extra 18,056 people seen compared to the same time last year. That is a demand increase of almost six per cent, or the equivalent of Mount Isa's population. Despite that huge increase, 99 per cent of the sickest patients were seen within two minutes of reaching hospital and the median wait time across all categories was just 17 minutes.

We have managed this surge in demand because the Palaszczuk government is investing in our hospitals. We have delivered 527 new beds in our hospitals—opened, available and treating patients now. There is plenty more to come. We have a record hospital building program that includes major redevelopments at the Logan, Caboolture and Ipswich hospitals, as well as delivering major health infrastructure projects right across Queensland, such as the Cairns Southern Corridor Health Precinct, the Cairns Hospital mental health unit, the Rockhampton alcohol and other drugs rehabilitation facility, the Blackall, Kingaroy, Roma, Thursday Island and Sarina hospital developments and the new adolescent extended treatment facility to replace the Barrett centre, which was cruelly closed by those opposite.

Since 2015, the Palaszczuk government has invested in emergency department projects in Townsville, Logan, Hervey Bay, Gladstone, Atherton, Maryborough, Caboolture and Redlands. Since coming to government we have hired 5,963 more nurses and midwives and 2,017 more doctors, including an extra 691 nurses and midwives and 337 doctors in just the last six months. This is reducing elective surgery wait times. Since 2015, the number of patients receiving their first specialist outpatient appointment increased by 14.7 per cent. That is almost an extra 80,000 patients who received their initial outpatient appointment in the last financial year compared to the number in 2015. The Palaszczuk government is delivering more and better health care for all Queenslanders every single day.