




Speech By  
**Hon. Dr Steven Miles**  
**MEMBER FOR MURRUMBA**

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Record of Proceedings, 24 October 2019

## MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

### Mental Health Services

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (10.11 am): Keeping Queenslanders healthy both physically and mentally is a priority for the Palaszczuk government. That means ensuring the most appropriate and effective responses to people experiencing a mental health crisis. In Queensland 20 per cent of adults experience a mental disorder each year and 3½ per cent of Queenslanders are estimated to experience a severe mental disorder requiring a crisis response. This means many people experiencing significant episodes of anxiety, depression, psychosis, suicidal ideation or self-harm attempts will call triple 0 as the first line to access help and care.

People accessing emergency services in a mental health crisis have increased by more than 20 per cent in the past five years. This government saw the need for increased mental health supports in that first response, before hospital. This year we have partnered with the Queensland Ambulance Service and the HHSs in the South-East Queensland corner to pilot senior mental health clinicians working with senior paramedics to respond to people experiencing a mental health crisis in the community. These QAS mental health co-responder units provide an infield assessment and ensure the most appropriate management for people experiencing a mental health crisis.

We are already seeing results. Approximately 60 per cent of people seen by the QAS mental health co-responder units already operating in the south-east are staying in their own homes or utilising alternative care options to the emergency department. That is 60 per cent. Our co-responder unit in Metro South HHS will expand to a seven-day-a-week service in response to the success of the pilot. That means people experiencing a mental health crisis are getting the best possible care seven days a week.

Paramedics and emergency medical dispatchers will continue to have access to the mental health practitioners based in the QAS Operations Centre in Brisbane who operate from 8 am to midnight seven days a week providing assistance statewide. These mental health clinicians in the QAS Operations Centre have access to Queensland Health's mental health clinical databases, which include information on a person's mental health history, treatment plans, police and ambulance intervention plans, and other important information. This government is working hard to make real change where it matters. We are committed to continuing to deliver a first-class health system that works with the patient to improve outcomes while also keeping ED beds available for emergencies.