




Speech By
Hon. Dr Steven Miles

MEMBER FOR MURRUMBA

Record of Proceedings, 28 November 2019

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Cairns Hospital, Cardiac Catheter Laboratory

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (10.24 am): Heart disease is responsible for one in three deaths in Queensland. Last year, we saw a 10 per cent increase in the number of patients arriving at Queensland hospitals with a cardiac condition. Mr Speaker, last month I joined you and the member for Cairns to officially open the second cardiac catheter laboratory at Cairns Hospital. That is right: the second cardiac catheter laboratory for Cairns. This means that people in Cairns now have even more cardiac care services.

The \$2.8 million project, jointly funded by the Palaszczuk government and the Far North Queensland Hospital Foundation, will allow more than 600 cardiac patients to be seen next year. This new facility will make a big difference for patients who will now be able to receive treatment closer to home. It will mean that a lot more patients are seen quicker and, in lots of cases, it will mean that they can avoid travelling to Townsville or Brisbane for treatment.

These additional services are not just life changing for patients; they also mean more health jobs in the region. During construction, 25 staff and three apprentices were employed. Now that the catheter laboratory is operational, additional health staff have been hired, including a dedicated nurse unit manager and a new specialist. Thanks to the new catheter laboratory and new frontline staff, Cairns Hospital can now deliver electrophysiology—a specialised treatment for patients with heart rhythm problems. When I visited the hospital I was told that the hardworking team had already been able to double the number of patients receiving implantable devices with the addition of the electrophysiology specialist.

Not only is this cardiac catheter laboratory a boost for Cairns but also it is a boost for other rural areas. The Cairns Hospital cardiac team has also recently started providing outreach services to patients across the Cairns and hinterland and Torres and cape HHS regions as part of the Palaszczuk government's \$12.4 million cardiac care commitment. This is a significant step in helping to close the gap in Indigenous health outcomes. I would like to thank the Cairns community. Their \$1.4 million in donations is a testament to the support and love the people of Far North Queensland have for the Cairns Hospital.