




Speech By
Ali King

MEMBER FOR PUMICESTONE

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PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Pumicestone Electorate, General Practitioners

 **Ms KING** (Pumicestone—ALP) (2.33 pm): Time and time again people in Pumicestone tell me that it is hard to get a GP appointment, but this is not a situation that has come about by chance. In 2019 the federal government classified Caboolture, Beachmere and Bribie as non-distribution priority areas. That decision makes it harder to attract enough GPs to live and work in Pumicestone.

There is a fiction at the heart of the federal government's decisions about which areas should get DPA status. The federal government seems to think that the people in Pumicestone face the same challenges as people in every other suburb across Greater Brisbane. Let me take Nundah as an example. It is an inner-city suburb with a median age of 33—15 years younger than Pumicestone. Pumicestone is the oldest state electorate in Queensland. People in Nundah are not only younger but also they see their GP less. They average 4.6 visits a year and have 73 per cent of those appointments bulk-billed.

Bribie and Beachmere residents visit their GP 7.9 times per year and have nearly 95 per cent of their appointments bulk-billed. This reflects the greater health burden and much lower incomes of people in Pumicestone—almost half that of Nundah—yet Nundah boasts 109.5 GPs per 10,000 residents. Bribie and Beachmere have 74.6. In Caboolture that number drops to 68.8. People in Pumicestone see their doctor more, they have more complex health needs and their low incomes mean they need more bulk-billing, yet Pumicestone has up to 40 GPs fewer per 10,000 people. This is a matter of health equity. Pumicestone and Nundah are starkly different and that must be recognised by the federal government.

A Mr Robert Singh came and saw me at my recent mobile office at Banksia Beach. Mr Singh and his wife still travel to Brisbane for GP appointments. He loves living on Bribie, but they wished they had known how hard finding a GP would be before moving to the island. When my friend Lee's elderly mother needed an urgent appointment recently, her regular GP could not fit her in for 10 days. Lee drove her mother 30 minutes to Caboolture to receive care—a trip that takes its toll on a very sick, frail and elderly person.

Doctors and staff are also calling on the federal government to reclassify Pumicestone as a DPA area. Dr Khoo, Director at Welsby Parade Medical Centre, says there is a shortage of doctors on the island and the situation will only get worse.

I am calling on our federal member for Longman, Terry Young, to work with me to put the health needs of our community first. I am asking him to urge the federal health minister to reclassify Bribie, Beachmere and Caboolture as distribution priority areas when that decision is made in July. Let us get this done so people in Pumicestone can finally see a GP when they most need one.