




Speech By
Julianne Gilbert

MEMBER FOR MACKAY

Record of Proceedings, 16 June 2021

MOTION

Health System

 **Mrs GILBERT** (Mackay—ALP) (5.26 pm): I support the amended motion. Every day in Queensland our hardworking staff do an incredible job caring for Queenslanders. Whether someone is a midwife delivering our newest Queenslanders, a nurse in an ICU ward caring for people in their hour of need, a paramedic out there on the road off to an emergency or a doctor working in regional Queensland or in any part of the Queensland health workforce, I want to put on the record my thanks for the amazing work that they do every day.

I am also pleased to be part of the Palaszczuk Labor government, a government that delivers record health budgets year after year. We continue to ensure that our health system remains strong. We do this by restoring the frontline services and staff that were savagely cut by those opposite and building the health infrastructure that Queensland needs.

It is the Palaszczuk Labor government that has been fixing the mess that was left behind by the LNP Newman government. The Labor government delivers record health budgets, in stark contrast to those opposite. When they were in government, the LNP did not build or even announce a plan to build a single new public hospital.

The LNP's legacy when it comes to providing public healthcare services in our state is to cut services. Then they sack the workers and sell off the assets. The Leader of the Opposition sometimes does not know up from down. This is the man who thought that the LNP cuts had improved Townsville's health services. He said, 'I think the hospital is running pretty well,' after he sacked all those nurses.

The LNP are simply determined to talk down our health system at every single opportunity. I certainly will not be listening to those whose mates in Canberra have been undermining Medicare for years and they have made it more expensive to see a GP. What they are doing is pushing more people into hospitals because Queenslanders know that if they turn up to a public hospital they will get free, world-class health care delivered by a world-class workforce. The lack of bulk-billing doctors is especially apparent in regional Queensland and where I am from.

Mr Deputy Speaker Kelly, you will not believe this: only last week in Canberra they were caught red-handed trying to sneak through more cuts to Medicare. If those opposite really cared about Queensland's health system, they would be banging on the doors of their friends in Canberra to reverse those Medicare cuts.

When families are doing it tough and cannot access a bulk-billing doctor, they do not go to a doctor. They choose to put food on the table. They want to keep a roof over their heads and keep the lights on. They wait until it is an absolute emergency before they show up at our EDs. This is putting more strain on our medical services. What did the member for Dawson do when all of our bulk-billing clinics closed in Mackay? Instead of finding a solution, he said, 'Go to your ED; it is your right.' How

shameful it was. He could not care less. He had to be shamed into doing something after the absolute outcry from constituents. They knew that turning up to an ED was not a solution to not having bulk-billing clinics.

I am pleased that the Palaszczuk government continues to deliver services. In my region of Mackay we will see upgraded mental health facilities that will provide safe and private clinical environments for patients, improve patient management and improve the delivery of mental health services. On top of this, there is a new pilot crisis support space at Mackay Base Hospital providing an alternative to emergency department care for someone arriving at the hospital in distress. It is not just in my region; it is across Queensland that we are delivering.