




Speech By
Kim Richards

MEMBER FOR REDLANDS

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ADJOURNMENT

Redlands Electorate

 **Ms RICHARDS** (Redlands—ALP) (7.10 pm): Our Palaszczuk government is laser focused on delivering the best possible health care for all Redlanders. After much advocacy to the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services, we had a review done on our southern Morton Bay Islands. They are a very unique part of South-East Queensland. As a result of that review we are getting 11 new paramedics to service those islands, so that is really fantastic news. That is building on the satellite hospital that we are delivering. The land deal has been locked in with a swap with the Redland City Council. I believe they got a nice little benefit in the uptake on the land swap. The land is locked in and we are consulting with the community at the moment on the services that it can potentially provide. I know that the satellite hospital will not only service our island community but also the growing end of southern Redlands. It will take pressure off the Redlands Hospital.

Work is well underway on the \$50 million hospital car park. The big crane was installed this week. The Metro South Hospital and Health Service is running a competition for all school students to 'name that crane', so I encourage everybody to get on board. Works are also well underway on the stage 1 expansion of the Redlands Hospital. It will include a new intensive care unit and additional beds. That is a really important development.

When we look at why we have pressure on our emergency departments and hospitals, I have to say that it is our side of the House that is doing the heavy lifting in terms of delivering on health care. The federal government is falling behind on aged care, and I will tell you that right now. You only need to go and visit the Macleay ward at the Redlands Hospital, which should have been for general medicine where a person who is in emergency could get a ward bed if they need it. It has been converted into a dementia care ward. That is the federal government not doing its job in aged care. When we look at why we have pressure on our hospitals, the other thing is that access to GPs is forcing Redlanders to head to the emergency department. On average, the stats report about \$41 in out-of-pocket expenses, and access to bulk-billing is not easy. Those things are putting pressure on our hospitals, and the federal government should be looking at how they can address that and do better in the aged care space.

I want to congratulate all Redlanders: we are on the leader board in Queensland. We are No. 4 for COVID vaccination rates of the first dose, so congratulations. Going forward this will be the pandemic of the unvaccinated, so I cannot stress enough how important it is. To anybody who is hesitating, I say please go and get vaccinated. There are so many options out there, including community pharmacies and GPs. I am excited this weekend that the Victoria Point Bunnings is offering the vax, so I encourage all Redlanders to go for gold. Let's go for the first spot on the leader board and get out there and get vaccinated.