



Speech By  
**Hon. Yvette D'Ath**


**MEMBER FOR REDCLIFFE**

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Record of Proceedings, 30 November 2021

## **MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

### **Mental Health Services, Parliamentary Inquiry**

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Minister for Health and Ambulance Services) (9.53 am): When it comes to demand for mental health services, we know that 70 per cent of GP presentations in 2021 are mental health related, up from 61 per cent in 2017. We also know that 10 per cent of the population received MBS supported mental health care in 2019-20, almost twice the rate from the past 10 years. An estimated 2.2 per cent of the Queensland population has received specialist clinical mental health care from Queensland Health services in 2020-21. The Palaszczuk government invests approximately \$1.8 billion annually in mental health. This includes: \$350 million for the *Connecting care to recovery 2016-2021* mental health, alcohol and other drugs plan; \$205.8 million in capital projects to establish 89 new mental health beds and upgrade existing inpatient and subacute treatment beds; \$61.9 million for the continued rollout of suicide prevention crisis responses and enhanced services; and an expansion of the Queensland Ambulance Service's Mental Health Co-Responder Program.

In addition, we know that COVID has further exacerbated demands on our mental health services in Queensland. That is why we invested \$74.5 million in the Mental Health and Wellbeing package, which includes: \$46.5 million to support Queensland mental health responses; and \$30 million for non-government providers to prepare and respond to the pandemic. The Palaszczuk government is in the process of finalising a new five-year plan for Queensland, informed by extensive stakeholder consultation and a needs analysis. We are also currently negotiating with the Commonwealth to finalise a new national mental health and suicide prevention agreement and five-year bilateral arrangements for state and Commonwealth government investment in mental health.

Primary health wait times and out-of-pocket expenses have also exploded under the Morrison government. Out-of-pocket specialist costs have increased by nearly 51 per cent across Queensland since 2012-13, and out-of-pocket GP costs have increased by 33 per cent across Queensland since 2012-13. The Australian Association of Psychologists report that the Medicare rebate for psychology visits has increased by only \$2.65 since 2006. The Australian Association of Psychologists also have reported that raising the Medicare rebate will enable more psychologists to bulk-bill, enabling more clients to stay in treatment so their condition is adequately treated and allowing greater retention of psychologists in the profession.

The Palaszczuk government knows that we need to shine a light on mental health and better understand the needs and demand pressures arising from COVID but also more generally across the mental health system in Queensland. That is why the Palaszczuk government will be establishing a parliamentary inquiry into mental health services in Queensland. We are confident that our parliament can play an important role in shaping the future of our mental health services in Queensland.