




Speech By
Jennifer Howard

MEMBER FOR IPSWICH

Record of Proceedings, 1 December 2022

PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENT

Ipswich, Health and Wellbeing

 **Ms HOWARD** (Ipswich—ALP) (2.40 pm): Creating a healthier Ipswich community is something I am passionate about and it is why I am pleased to acknowledge today the great work being done by a local health and wellness initiative in Ipswich called My Local Health. My Local Health was kickstarted last year by Camilla Thompson, a pharmacist and inspiring social entrepreneur who is driven to create better health, wellness and fitness outcomes for Ipswich. Camilla set up the My Local Health digital health directory website last year to connect local Ipswich people to health professionals and to get information and advice about various health, wellness and fitness topics. My Local Health also hosted its first sports expo in March this year and its first health and fitness expo last month. The sports expo and health and fitness expo will become regular events in Ipswich. I was proud to support them. It will allow local people to meet one-on-one with health and fitness providers all in the same place. There are opportunities to sign up to the local gym, talk to allied health professionals or join local sports clubs.

Ipswich has a proud sporting history and has an above average number of local sports clubs that nurture future sporting professionals and champions. Camilla from My Local Health understands this well and she has tapped into that local sentiment. However, while we certainly love our sport in Ipswich there is still a lot more we can do to help local people adopt healthier lifestyles and take up regular exercise. Ipswich's rate of obesity currently sits at 35 per cent. It is well above the state average which is 25 per cent. Our incidence of chronic disease in the community is also well above the state average. More people in Ipswich on average suffer from diabetes, cardio vascular disease, arthritis, asthma and mental health and behavioural problems. The end result is that most of West Moreton Health admissions are made up of people presenting with chronic disease conditions.

With our city's rapidly growing population, as well as our aging population, our local hospital and health services are under a lot of pressure. The need to expand Ipswich Hospital and invest more resources into Ipswich health services is something that I and the Palaszczuk government have recognised, with \$146.3 million committed over five years to carry out stage 1 of the Ipswich Hospital expansion and a further \$710 million committed for stage 2 which will deliver 200 additional hospital beds by 2027. The investment shows this government's commitment to delivering world-class hospital and health services for Ipswich that meet our unique health needs.

Private and community health providers also have an important role to play in helping to improve health outcomes for Ipswich people. Most importantly, individuals have a role to play. One way we can do this is by reaching out to the many fantastic free and affordable local health providers we are fortunate to have in Ipswich, such as My Local Health; the Ipswich Hospital Foundation, which provides great free exercise classes locally; Kambu Medical Centre; Neami National; and Stride Hub. All of these can empower us to take charge of our own health and support us along the way. I urge Ipswich people to take advantage of it.