




Speech By
Hon. Meaghan Scanlon

MEMBER FOR GAVEN

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Youth, Mental Health Services

 **Hon. MAJ SCANLON** (Gaven—ALP) (Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Youth Affairs) (10.12 am): Beyond Blue reports that 75 per cent of mental health issues occur for many people before the age of 25. Headspace reports one in four young people experience some kind of mental ill health. In my role as Minister for Youth Affairs I have travelled across the state to listen to the stories of young people because everyone's experience is unique. What I have heard has had one common thread—the need for more accessible and affordable mental health services. These young people have bravely and sincerely shared their own struggles and those of their friends and peers. We have heard them.

This year's budget will see \$1.64 billion invested into critical mental health services. It will give greater support and access to young Queenslanders who are struggling with mental ill health. Experiences with mental health are wide and varied, as are the circumstances, causes and stresses. This investment will respond with an holistic approach.

This significant investment in mental health also complements our capital works program. Our record \$9.78 billion hospital and health plan includes vital funding for the infrastructure to support these services. It will build on what we have already delivered—like Jacaranda Place, which replaced the Barrett centre which was shamefully closed by those opposite, leaving the state without a dedicated place for the most at-risk young people; and like the recently completed mental health stabilisation unit at Robina, which I recently visited. This unit transforms the experience for patients during a crisis, especially when a lot of the time busy emergency departments are not the most suitable environment. This unit has led to a reduction in the length of stay for many patients, with the average down by 35 per cent. This facility will soon be joined by a 40-bed mental health rehabilitation unit at the Gold Coast University Hospital. Importantly, we are building a brand new \$1.3 billion 404-bed hospital in Coomera and new beds at Robina and Gold Coast University Hospital.

These issues are complex, and the solutions are not always quick and simple. The courage for government to admit that is no small thing, but we owe it to those courageous Queenslanders who came forward asking for help. It has always been Labor governments that take on hard reforms for those who need it most. This is one of them.