



Speech By  
**Dale Last**


**MEMBER FOR BURDEKIN**

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Record of Proceedings, 16 March 2023

**PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT**

**Burdekin Electorate, Health Services**

 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (2.12 pm): Perhaps one of the most important services, regardless of where one lives, is health. Time after time I have stood in this place to speak about the lack of health services throughout the Burdekin electorate. If we take Clermont, for example, the last medical superintendent left in September 2018—that is right: 4½ years ago—and we are still waiting for a permanent doctor in that community. Let us not forget that it was this government that closed the doctors surgery at Clermont and it was the Mackay Hospital and Health Service that has not delivered on any of the promises made to the community at a public forum to address this very issue. I want to add to that today by talking about the provision of health services in Collinsville. Today I table a collection of letters addressed to the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services.

*Tabled paper:* Nonconforming petition regarding unfilled health positions in Collinsville [316](#).

There are a total of 232 identical letters signed by Collinsville residents, and that represents over 15 per cent of the Collinsville community. The requests from the people of Collinsville are simple. They are requesting a second doctor and a permanent QAS staff member for that community. Despite the comments made by the Deputy Premier and others, health services in Collinsville are lacking and are putting people at risk. It is not just the residents themselves being put at risk; more than 18 months ago concerns from the community about ambulance services were raised directly with the minister. Residents spoke of the QAS staff member at that time looking exhausted and suffering from fatigue and residents were genuinely concerned for that staff member's health and welfare. What has changed? Nothing, and it is the same with the doctors. Despite repeated assurances, Collinsville still has only one doctor. Residents, just as they did for the QAS staff member, have expressed concerns regarding fatigue and the effect on the doctor's health.

Let us be very clear: the nearest backup for both the doctor and QAS staff is 100 kilometres away. In a medical emergency, minutes matter and fatigue can be deadly. I ask all members, just as I ask the minister, to put themselves in the shoes of a Collinsville resident who needs to call for an ambulance and has to hope that there has not been another incident that means that the response to their call could literally be over an hour away. The people of Collinsville deserve to be heard and deserve to have their concerns addressed. It is an honour to represent a community that stands up for the people who care for them in an emergency and it is an honour to represent a community that will stand together to demand their fair share. It is not too much to ask for a second permanent doctor at Collinsville and for two permanent ambulance officers to be based in that community, particularly when there are two significant coalmines in that community employing several hundred personnel and that at any given time there could be a call on emergency services to provide an emergency response.