



Speech By  
**Hon. Grace Grace**


**MEMBER FOR MCCONNEL**

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Record of Proceedings, 16 March 2023

## **MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

### **Student Wellbeing Package**

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (10.58 am): As we know, school can be a wonderful time in children's lives, but it is not without its challenges. As minister, I am acutely aware of the challenges facing students and their mental health and wellbeing. That is why the Palaszczuk government went to the last election with a game-changing \$100 million student wellbeing package. Our nation-leading commitment was to directly employ during this term up to an additional 464 frontline health and wellbeing professionals so that every student in all state schools will have access to a professional to support their health and wellbeing. In addition, the wellbeing package includes a pilot of GPs working in selected state secondary schools one day a week to provide students with access to free, confidential health support and advice.

I am pleased to report on the progress we are making on both elements of this commitment. As at the end of February, the department has employed 333 wellbeing professionals. Considering the current challenges with recruitment in the health sector, this is a great result. The 333 are made up of 131 psychologists, 79 guidance officers, 112 social workers and 11 youth workers. In relation to GPs in schools, our original commitment was to pilot GPs in 20 schools, but given the interest we expanded the pilot to include 50 schools. With 42 GPs in schools now up and running, we have already met and exceeded our original election commitment.

The feedback from those 42 schools has been extremely encouraging. In the 2022 school year, students at those schools attended nearly 5,000 GP appointments. The benefits reported by students at two of the pilot schools—Murgon State High School in Nanango and Deception Bay State High School in Bancroft—included easy access to a GP for timely and convenient health care; immediate treatment of injuries; better access to other wellbeing and health services through referral and GP advocacy; and students feel safe and comfortable to talk through their concerns. One year 11 student at Deception Bay commented—

Having a GP in school is really convenient. The staff at the school clinic are really nice. They are so helpful and friendly.

Every child deserves a world-class education and if they are experiencing health and wellbeing issues we are delivering on our election commitment to make sure that they can get the expert and timely support they need.