




Speech By
Hon. Shannon Fentiman

MEMBER FOR WATERFORD

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Health System

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women) (9.58 am): It is wonderful to rise today to update the House on the very important work being done across Queensland's health system. Last year the Palaszczuk government committed a record \$23.6 billion towards investing in our health infrastructure, our services and our workforce, and aren't our frontline health workers just amazing? It has been a real privilege to get out and about and meet so many of them in my first few days as health minister.

Through our Health and Hospitals Plan we are investing over \$9.7 billion to build three new hospitals, to expand 11 others, deliver a new cancer centre and roll out seven satellite hospitals—and aren't those satellite hospitals going to be game changers for local families who will be able to receive health care closer to home? This is the largest health capital program in the country, delivering—wait for it—3,378 more beds.

Today I am pleased to say that we are taking an even bigger step forward. Today we are announcing that Besix Watpac has been awarded the tender for the \$710 million Ipswich Hospital stage 2 expansion.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Members of the opposition, there is far too much noise. I am having trouble hearing the minister making her ministerial statement. You have three days of parliament coming up in which to scrutinise the new ministers. I would have thought you would want to hear what the ministers have to say to assist with that scrutiny.

Ms FENTIMAN: There is just so much excitement around our infrastructure plan for health! Today we are also announcing the \$465 million tender for the QEII Jubilee Hospital expansion. Together, these expansions will deliver 312 new hospital beds and support 2,800 construction workers. Jobs and health—what a wonderful announcement.

This announcement comes just days after I visited the Mackay Base Hospital, on my very first day as health minister, to announce that Besix Watpac was also successful in securing the \$250 million tender to expand that hospital, delivering 128 new beds across paediatric, medical and surgical wards and creating over 600 construction jobs in the Mackay community. All of this follows the \$1.17 billion in contracts announced earlier this month to expand the Logan Hospital, the PA Hospital and the Cairns Hospital.

This means that in May alone the Palaszczuk government has awarded \$2.55 billion in contracts—a historic investment in the health and wellbeing of Queenslanders. This investment, importantly, will take pressure off our emergency departments. It means new operating theatres. It means that every Queenslanders can receive the high-quality health care they deserve closer to home. That is what we are about: health care closer to home. I am so proud that our government is leading the nation with our investment in health.