




Speech By
Brittany Lauga

MEMBER FOR KEPPEL

Record of Proceedings, 21 August 2024

MOTION

Mental Health Services

 **Ms LAUGA** (Keppel—ALP) (4.35 pm): I move the following amendment—

That all words after 'House' be omitted and the following inserted:

1. notes that:
 - (a) the Miles government is delivering the most significant uplift in mental health funding in Queensland's history;
 - (b) mental health funding has increased to a record \$2.48 billion per year; up from \$1.15 billion when the LNP were in government;
 - (c) this funding uplift is only possible because of the Miles government's mental health levy on big business.
2. condemns the former Newman LNP government for their past actions including their cuts to mental health services, including the closure of the Barrett adolescent mental health centre.
3. acknowledges the risk of any future LNP government cutting mental health services again because they will not support the mental health levy.
4. commends the Miles government for its ongoing support for fully funded mental health services for Queenslanders.'

In moving this amendment, I want to acknowledge all mental health survivors and also acknowledge the member for South Brisbane for her courage in speaking this evening about her own mental health challenges. During my time in this place over the last almost 10 years, a number of members have so courageously spoken about their experience with mental health and mental illness. I want to acknowledge each of them for their courage in doing so because I believe that the stigma relating to mental health and mental illness has reduced over the years. Those members who have courageously spoken in this place about their experiences have absolutely made a difference in our communities.

What we know is that mental health care needs to be tailored to the person requiring care. Labor has listened to the experts and has a plan, and that plan is backed by a sustainable funding source. There is no one-size-fits-all approach, including a series of 10 or 20 sessions with a psychologist. Many of us would know people with mental illness who do not necessarily want to visit a psychologist or see that as their pathway to treatment. This is why the government is investing significantly in a variety of psychological supports.

Mental health support can be provided in a variety of ways and we need to offer options that will meet the person where they are at in their journey. More than 427 wellbeing professionals have been employed across Queensland to provide direct wellbeing services into 759 primary, secondary, combined and special schools. I know that those wellbeing professionals are absolutely making a difference to those students. When I have talked to students about being able to access those services at school, they have been so incredibly pleased to have those wellbeing professionals directly available in their schools.

In terms of early intervention for mental health, we are supporting the Royal Flying Doctor Service to provide mental health services to communities right across Queensland. Our Women and Girls' Health Strategy has received \$18 million to deliver virtual therapeutic mental health and wellbeing services to provide early intervention help to women and girls. We recently invested \$10 million to provide psychosocial supports for those in social housing. We have established 12 new acute response teams across eight hospital and health services to provide timely and assertive treatment and care for children and adolescents.

Let us not forget the devastating impacts of the LNP's closure of the Barrett Adolescent Centre when they were in charge of Queensland's mental health services. I have heard the member for Inala talk in this place about what she witnessed firsthand when working at the Barrett Adolescent Centre when the LNP closed that centre and the devastating impact that had on the young patients who were there. Let us not forget too that the Greens went on to take the LNP's preferences, which elected the member for South Brisbane, despite the fact that the LNP were the party in government that actually closed that centre and the devastating impact that had on the lives of the people who were treated at that centre.

The Greens party obviously has not been paying attention any time the Miles government has talked about the mental health of Queenslanders. If they had been paying attention, they would know that we are already taxing big corporations to continue strengthening our mental health system to ensure that every Queenslanders has access to the mental health care they need close to home. If they had been paying attention, they would know that, as part of the 2022-23 state budget, the Queensland government introduced a mental health levy on big business. They would also know that our mental health levy on big business is putting \$1.948 billion into mental health, alcohol and other drug services. The member for South Brisbane should know that, as this was a recommendation from the Mental Health Select Committee, of which she was a member.

We are doing so much to help support the mental health of Queenslanders. I commend the amendment to the motion to the House.