




Speech By
Hon. Shannon Fentiman

MEMBER FOR WATERFORD

Record of Proceedings, 17 April 2024

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Cancer Care

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women) (9.47 am): Everyone in this place will at some point in their lifetime be affected by cancer, whether it is a close friend, a family member or a loved one. More than 30,000 Queenslanders are diagnosed every single year or roughly 90 Queenslanders a day. Just last week I met with Michelle on the Gold Coast who told me about her battle with breast cancer. She told me about the impact it had had saying—

In between scans and results is the scary part—you're always wondering what comes next, but I'm lucky to have lots of support.

We know that cancer is complex and can affect everybody differently. That is why Michelle's perspective and the perspectives of thousands of other cancer patients like her are so important. I take this opportunity to remind Queenslanders that our Cancer Strategy survey will be closing later today. I encourage everybody who wants to have their say to do so before the survey closes. So far, we have had the honour of hearing from over 1,000 Queenslanders who have been affected by cancer as well as their families, friends and carers. That is over 1,000 people whose lived experience will help shape the next decade of cancer care through the Queensland Cancer Strategy.

This strategy and the survey responses will help us determine what gaps currently exist in cancer care and how we can solve them. It will also help inform how we can better connect services across the state so that Queenslanders can access treatment and care closer to home. With cancer rates on the rise, the time to act is now, which is exactly what our government is doing. It is why we are building a new state-of-the-art Queensland Cancer Centre right here in Brisbane. It is one of the centrepieces of our health big build and will deliver 150 extra beds for cancer patients. It will also be one of only two facilities in the nation to offer proton beam therapy, which is a highly specialised form of radiation that accurately and painlessly targets tumours.

Whilst our government is putting in place strategies and infrastructure to care for cancer patients, our incredible researchers are also leading the fight against cancer. A team at the PA Hospital is spearheading a world-first cancer trial targeting prostate cancer cells which, if successful, could help people all over the world. With my recent announcement of a \$73 million investment in a new 10-year research strategy, I know we will continue to see more medical and scientific research conducted right here in Queensland, translating into real world cancer treatments.

It was an honour to make the announcement of a new research strategy alongside researchers at QIMR Berghofer Medical Research Institute, and they showed me some of the incredible work they are doing on cancer fighting CAR T-cell therapy. I met with Jane, who began the CAR T-cell therapy trial as a last option to treat her lymphoma. She is now in remission thanks to the work and the staff at QIMR Berghofer. Queensland is doing so much in the fight against cancer, and our new Queensland Cancer Strategy is the next vital step in that fight. Once again, I want to thank everyone who has

contributed to the survey. I encourage anyone who has not done so already to have their voice heard, complete the survey and join the thousands of Queenslanders helping to shape the future of cancer care.