




Speech By
Hon. Shannon Fentiman

MEMBER FOR WATERFORD

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Health System

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women) (9.48 am): The Miles Labor government is doing what matters for Queenslanders by investing in and growing our health system. Whether it is delivering innovative and expanded services, building thousands of new beds or hiring the staff our growing state needs, only the Miles Labor government has a plan for our health system. On this side of the House we do not slash funding from the health budget and we do not sack frontline workers. We are building the infrastructure our growing state needs.

Since we were elected, we have delivered over 2,000 beds across countless projects, including close to 600 in the last year alone. We plan to build almost 2,700 more over the next four years. That is on top of the additional capacity we have created through our nation-leading Satellite Hospitals Program, which is taking pressure off our emergency departments and means that Queenslanders can get the care they need.

We are not just building the beds our growing population needs; we are also hiring the health workers to staff those beds. Since 2015 we have hired more than 24,000 health workers, including more than 14,000 nurses and midwives, 4,200 doctors and 1,500 ambos. These will be bolstered by our \$1.7 billion workforce strategy.

All of this is only possible because of our record investments in our health system—\$28.9 billion this year alone, almost double what it was in 2015. This investment means we can be at the cutting edge of health delivery in Australia. We were one of the first jurisdictions to legislate safe nurse-to-patient ratios, opposed by those opposite, and we will lead the nation in allowing nurses and midwives to prescribe MS-2 Step, also opposed by those opposite.

This government puts Queensland women and girls at the centre of what we do. Earlier this year we announced our more than \$1 billion Women and Girls' Health Strategy, delivering dozens of initiatives like women's health hubs, support for pelvic pain and endometriosis, and boosting social workers to support women and girls in their mental health.

We know that investing in women means more than investing in women's health. We have also introduced targets to increase the representation of women on government boards and bodies, something that those opposite cut when they were in government. We are also ensuring 50 per cent of the clean energy workforce are women. In an Australian-first, we are tackling the superannuation gap by changing the laws so superannuation contributions are paid on all parental leave.

We also know that women need to be safe from violence to fully participate in economic opportunities. We have invested over \$1.9 billion in preventing domestic, family and sexual violence and supporting women and children escaping violent relationships. I am immensely proud of what the Miles Labor government has achieved, but all of these achievements and more are at risk under the LNP if they are elected in October.