



Speech By  
**Hon. Shannon Fentiman**


**MEMBER FOR WATERFORD**

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Record of Proceedings, 12 September 2024

**MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

**Health System**

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women) (9.49 am): Queenslanders deserve world-class health care closer to home and that is what we are delivering. Our record health budget this year of \$28.9 billion is delivering more hospital upgrades, new hospitals, satellite hospitals, more beds and more frontline health workers than ever before. Despite record demand, we know that these investments are directly helping to address the rising pressures on our health system and reduce wait times. The most recent health data showed that across every emergency department measure we are improving. That is despite a surge in serious presentations and the busiest quarter we have ever seen.

In Caboolture, we have seen a 16 per cent improvement for patient off-stretcher times compared to the same time last year. When it comes to elective surgery, we are delivering remarkable results. Queensland leads the nation when it comes to elective surgeries, treating almost 38,000 patients during the last quarter. More than eight in 10 patients were treated on time and the number of elective surgery long waits plummeted by almost 50 per cent in just 12 months.

I am also incredibly proud of everything that the Miles government has done for women's health. Earlier this year we announced our more than \$1 billion Women and Girls' Health Strategy, which is delivering dozens of initiatives such as women's health hubs, support for pelvic pain and endometriosis, and boosting social workers to support women's mental health. We are also delivering four nurse-led clinics in Queensland, which will bring health care even closer to home.

As the Minister for Mental Health, I am incredibly proud of our record \$1.9 billion investment in mental health through our Better Care Together Plan. While I am speaking about mental health today, of course, is R U OK? Day, an important reminder to check in with friends, family and colleagues and ask, 'Are you OK?' Through early intervention initiatives and improving access to mental health services and community-based support programs, the Miles Labor government is taking significant steps to address mental health and prevent suicide. Today, check in with someone you have not heard from in a while. It might lead to a conversation that could help save someone's life.

Speaking of saving lives, today I can share some really positive results about the significant improvements we are seeing for acute rheumatic fever and rheumatic heart disease cases in Queensland. RHD is entirely preventable and should not exist in this state. This year the Miles Labor government is investing \$324.7 million to achieve health equity for First Nations people and we are already starting to see results. In the Torres and Cape hospital and health region there has been an incredible 63 per cent decrease in new rheumatic heart disease cases since 2022-23 and there has been a 24 per cent reduction statewide. Only a Miles Labor government can deliver the health care that Queenslanders need and deserve. I am so pleased to see us delivering this every single day.