



Speech By  
**Hon. Dale Last**

**MEMBER FOR BURDEKIN**

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Record of Proceedings, 11 December 2025

**PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT**

**Clermont, Health Services**

 **Hon. DR LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (Minister for Natural Resources and Mines, Minister for Manufacturing and Minister for Regional and Rural Development) (3.00 pm): To say I am disappointed that Clermont is again facing challenges in the doctor space would be a gross understatement. Just last week the community was told in a Facebook post that the town's GP clinic faced imminent closure. To make matters even more tense, Clermont is one of the many regional communities where a hospital doctor also runs the town's GP clinic, a system known as 'right to practise'. After five years of lobbying and fighting for a doctor, the current GP arrived just over two years ago, breaking a long drought of permanent doctors at the hospital and meaning the town's GP clinic could reopen. It was a great day for Clermont, especially given the fact that very little assistance was offered by those opposite when they were in government or their federal counterparts.

Let me be very clear: general practice services are the sole responsibility of the federal government. Despite that, Queensland Health via the previous Mackay Hospital and Health Service board provided significant financial support to assist with the reopening of the GP clinic under a licence-to-occupy model that was due to be renegotiated and renewed in January 2026. I am advised that the licence holder, the current GP, opted not to pursue a renewal and subsequently decided to close the GP clinic. In the interests of transparency, I am also advised that a police investigation is currently underway into a serious workplace incident last week that has resulted in a doctor being suspended.

In stark contrast to what we have seen previously, this government has not buried its head in the sand when it comes to the health services that the people of Clermont need and deserve. Despite the obvious challenges, the Clermont Hospital will provide 24/7 emergency care and from 15 January will also provide outpatient clinics. Just as importantly, this government has ensured that work is already underway exploring suitable alternative options to support a GP clinic in open and honest consultation with ClermontConnect and other stakeholders. While some aspects must remain confidential to protect the privacy of individuals and in the interests of fairness, I can say that the current situation is vastly different from what we have seen in the past. I understand the concern and the frustration felt by the community of Clermont, and I share their concerns. I call on all relevant parties to engage respectfully, honestly and genuinely, with the health and safety of all community members the sole priority. Clermont needs a permanent doctor and I will continue to advocate on behalf of this great little community until such time as we secure a replacement.