




Speech By
Hon. Ros Bates

MEMBER FOR MUDGEERABA

Record of Proceedings, 10 December 2025

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Lehmann, Mr C; Health System, Workforce

 **Hon. RM BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (Minister for Finance, Trade, Employment and Training) (2.30 pm): I wish to acknowledge the passing of former TAFE Queensland board member Mr Chris Lehmann this past weekend. Chris was a loving husband, proud father and tireless advocate for the construction industry. My thoughts are with Chris's family and friends at this difficult time. Vale, Christopher Lehmann.

After a decade of decline under Labor, the Crisafulli LNP government has been working tirelessly to secure a pipeline of skilled workers to build Queensland's future. This week I was pleased to join the member for Coomera at Southport TAFE as we announced 2,000 free Diploma of Nursing Queensland training places for Queensland students in 2026. It is all part of our plan to heal Labor's health crisis and deliver a better lifestyle for Queenslanders through a stronger economy after Labor presided over a skill shortage during their decade of decline.

As a former nurse, I know just how important nurses are to delivering the health care Queenslanders need and deserve, particularly given our growing state. It is worth noting that, despite the fact that one in six new Queensland jobs are expected to be in the healthcare and social assistance sectors by 2028-29, those opposite dropped the ball in this space. The former Labor government let their federal Labor colleagues off the hook when it came to funding free nursing. They did not fight to continue funding for Queensland's Diploma of Nursing, and federal funding for this critical qualification dried up. Recognising the importance of the course to the healthcare and aged-care sectors, the Crisafulli LNP government is proudly funding 100 per cent of students' free access to this critical pathway. Not only are we subsidising fees for Diploma of Nursing students across TAFE, the Mater and CQU, we are also meeting the cost of their clinical placements, making it easier for students to earn while they learn. Trainee nurses can now complete their mandatory prac placements—

Ms Farmer interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Bulimba.

Ms BATES:—and become qualified while still being able to pay their rent, buy their groceries and support their families.

Ms Farmer interjected.

Mr Power interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Bulimba and member for Logan.

Ms BATES: While those opposite were happy to let the federal government walk away, the Crisafulli LNP government has invested in providing access to these subsidised clinical placements because students have told us this helps them complete their diploma. Of course, any time the federal government wishes to chip in to support trainee nurses it is more than welcome. With 20 per cent of Queensland's registered health workforce at or approaching retirement age—

Ms Farmer interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Bulimba, you are now warned.

Ms BATES:—this training is critical to see our students graduate job ready, skilled up and able to jump straight in to join our healthcare and aged-care workforce. After a decade of decline under Labor, the Crisafulli government is delivering a pipeline of skilled workers and a fresh start for Queensland's health workforce.