



Speech By
Hon. Tim Nicholls

MEMBER FOR CLAYFIELD

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Health Workforce

 **Hon. TJ NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (Minister for Health and Ambulance Services) (9.43 am): Our hardworking Queensland Ambulance Service paramedics, patient transport officers, and emergency medical dispatchers embody the values of our healthcare system—dedicated, resilient and unwavering in their commitment to Queenslanders in their time of need. In September, I announced the Crisafulli government had reached in-principle agreement with the United Workers Union for a new QAS certified agreement. I am pleased to advise the House that, following a ballot of all employees, QAS staff have resoundingly supported the proposed agreement. In fact, 85.4 per cent of those employees who were balloted voted in favour of the Crisafulli government's offer.

A government member interjected.

Mr NICHOLLS: I take that interjection. It was one of the largest ever and one of the largest participation rates ever because our paramedics know that they are being backed by the Crisafulli LNP government. This means that more than 6,700 frontline QAS officers will receive their well-deserved pay rises before Christmas. Importantly, they will also get back pay. The new agreement features other enhancements like attraction and retention incentives for those working in rural and remote locations as well as allowances to recognise staff working night shifts. I thank the UWU for their open, collaborative engagement and their shared commitment to supporting our valued ambulance workforce.

This agreement is another demonstration of the Crisafulli government working in partnership with the unions to deliver better wages and conditions for our workforce. In fact, the Crisafulli government has reached agreement on deals that cover 116,000 health workers, including our nurses and midwives, salaried medical officers, health workforce and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health workers.

It does not stop there. We are also doing the proper planning to secure the future of the health workforce. On 10 November, I released the Queensland Health workforce gap analysis which diagnoses the critical workforce shortages, challenges and systems left by Labor. The Queensland Health workforce gap analysis and associated consultation will form the backbone of the Crisafulli government's cohesive, proper and considered system-wide health workforce plan. The Crisafulli government is committed to respecting, retaining and growing the health workforce—and that is exactly what we are doing.