

Question on Notice

No. 311

Asked on 26 March 2026

HON S MILES ASKED MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND AMBULANCE SERVICES
(**HON T NICHOLLS**)—

QUESTION

Will the Minister advise, for each of Queensland's 26 reporting hospitals, for the month of January 2026, the five longest stays in emergency departments for care not completed within four hours?

ANSWER

Consistent with the response to Question on Notice 692-2024, it would be unreasonable to provide the data requested.

The Member would be pleased to learn that the Crisafulli Government has achieved a 46.4% reduction in patients stuck in an emergency department (ED) for longer than 24 hours compared to the same time last year. This is a direct result of the Crisafulli Government's 24-hour patient safety directive.

Evidence clearly demonstrates that the longer patients are in an ED after the emergency phase of care, the greater their risk of harm. This is why patients who don't need to be in the ED, shouldn't be forced to stay there.

The Crisafulli Government is pulling every lever possible to get patients where they need to be, which in turn opens up beds in the ED and supports paramedics to get people off the ramp and into hospital. I note that this policy is supported by stakeholders like the Australian College of Emergency Medicine who say 24 hours stays in an ED should be "a never event" as it is a risk to patient safety.

The main driver keeping patients in EDs for longer comes from bed block, which is exacerbated by the Commonwealth's failure to meet Queensland's need for aged care and NDIS places. Queensland is ground zero for these stranded patients.

As at the February 2026, Queensland had 1,425 stranded patients in our hospitals – representing 10.7% of all beds. These stranded patients cost Queensland's health system over \$3 million every day – a cost that should be met by the Commonwealth.

We know we need to get these patients into appropriate care to free up our hospital beds – and the Crisafulli Government remains willing and ready to work with the Commonwealth to achieve this. This will in turn get patients out of EDs quicker, and off ambulance ramps sooner.