

**Question on Notice**  
**No. 729**  
**Asked on 23 May 2007**

MR LAWLOR asked the Minister for Health (MR ROBERTSON)-

QUESTION:

With reference to the latest public hospital quarterly review—

What significant changes have occurred in the past 12 months at the Gold Coast Hospital?

ANSWER:

The total number of patients who have received surgery at the Gold Coast District Health Service has increased from 13,006 in the period March 2005 to February 2006 to 13,981 for the period March 2006 to February 2007. This is a 7.5% increase from the previous year.

The District has been able to achieve this increase in surgery due to the allocation of \$9.0 million Long Wait Enhancement Funding. This funding has enabled an increase in the number of surgical staff specialists in the areas of orthopaedics, ear/nose/throat and vascular surgery.

During the 2006 State Election, \$1.5 million was provided to enhance cardiac services in the District. With these funds the District has been able to implant 125 pacemakers, which is 25 cases above the yearly target, and insert an additional 154 drug eluting stents up to April 2007. The District was also able to commission a new, state of the art, interventional angiography suite at the Southport Campus in January 2007. To date 346 patients have benefited from this new service, having had either diagnostic or interventional procedures.

The Gold Coast Hospital Emergency Department continues to be the busiest in the state. The total number of patients who attended the Gold Coast Hospital Emergency Department from February 2006 to February 2007 is 66,290 an increase of 3,322 patients from the previous 12 months. Last year Queensland Health fast-tracked the opening of 30 extra beds at Robina to provide support for Gold Coast Hospital Emergency Department

There is a capital investment program currently underway to increase the number of beds at the Southport Hospital to assist the Emergency Department cope with the increased workload. In addition, the District has a number of supporting services to assist with hospital admission avoidance. These are:

- Emergency Department Early Discharge (EDDI);
- Community Hospital Interface Program (CHIP) – operates Monday to Friday 7.30am–9.30pm, and for eight hours on Saturday and Sunday;
- Hospital in the Nursing Home;
- eight Interim Care Beds – five for longer stay/older persons and three healthy ageing beds; and

- Transitional Care consisting of 38 community packages and four residential aged care beds managed by Adult Community Health. This program is designed to support older people with short-term (up to 12 weeks) assistance that will help them recover to their full potential following a hospital stay.

The District has leased 20 beds across the road from the Gold Coast Hospital at Pacific Private Hospital. The Robina Palliative Care ward has been relocated to this facility, making way for the ward to be refurbished to include an additional 18, much needed, mental health beds. This in turn will ease pressure on the Emergency Department.

The Gold Coast District Health Service currently has 503 fulltime doctors working at Robina and Southport Campuses, an increase of 152 doctors in two years. The District also currently employs 1,858 nursing staff, an increase of 207 nurses in two years.