

Question on Notice
No. 16
Asked on 11 February 2014

MR STEVENS asked the Minister for Health (MR SPRINGBORG)-

QUESTION:

With reference to the new Gold Coast University Hospital -

Will the Minister detail how health services on the Gold Coast and the surrounding region have been improved since the opening of this facility?

ANSWER:

I thank the Honourable Member for Mermaid Beach for his question.

The \$1.76 billion Gold Coast University Hospital (GCUH) is a significant investment in health infrastructure for the Gold Coast. Made up of seven main buildings with a total floor space of around 170,000 square metres, the new hospital has enabled a number of improvements in health care since the opening on 28 September 2013.

The new facility has improved privacy and patient safety with over 70% private rooms. There are state-of-the-art facilities to train the health care workers of the future and on-site research facilities. There are a range of break out spaces and amenities for patients and their families including courtyards, deck spaces, landscaped grounds, children's play areas, retail services and a multi-storey car park.

The Gold Coast and surrounding community now have access to a wider range of tertiary public health services not previously available locally. This is minimising the need for patients to travel to Brisbane to receive certain types of diagnostic tests or treatment.

The ability to manage major trauma has been improved with faster access to treatment for critically injured patients. The GCUH has a rooftop helipad with jumbo lift access directly to operating theatres, intensive care and medical imaging. Ambulances have external access to trauma rooms in the emergency department.

Cancer care has been enhanced with the commencement of radiation oncology and therapy services in December 2013. Treatment is now available for a wide range of cancer types including breast, prostate and lung. Treatment for head and neck cancers will be available in the coming months.

Cardiac surgery became available to public patients on the Gold Coast in November 2013 through a short-term service agreement with local private facilities. The GCUH has commenced cardiac surgery outpatient services and will be commencing surgery on site in early 2014.

Services for children have also received a boost. A dedicated children's critical care service commenced in the intensive care unit in February 2014. The service is working in

collaboration with Children's Health Services to care for children requiring high dependency care or short-term ventilation locally instead of transferring them to one of the paediatric intensive care units in Brisbane.

Diagnostic and imaging services to support a range of specialties have been expanded. Nuclear medicine, positron emission tomography (PET) and bone mineral densitometry studies are available for the first time in a public hospital on the Gold Coast.

Many of the services that were provided at the former Gold Coast Hospital have been expanded or have undergone significant improvements since the move to the GCUH. The emergency department has been expanded and there is a dedicated area for treating children. Birthing services have expanded the range of options for women with most suites having access to a birthing bath for water birth or pain relief. Rehabilitation services and mental health services have improved indoor and outdoor spaces for a range of therapies to enhance recovery and return to the community.

Services will continue to expand at the GCUH throughout this year. Maternal foetal medicine, which is the diagnosis and management of complex obstetric cases, will expand in the next few months. The Newborn Care Unit is preparing for an expansion in Level 3 Neonatal cots from two to eight in the coming months. Cancer services will start to prepare for the introduction of stem cell transplantation in the near future.