

Question on Notice
No. 44
Asked on 12 February 2014

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

QUESTION:

Will the Minister outline how services at Logan Hospital have improved in the following areas (a) midwifery services, (b) emergency department services, (c) ambulance ramping and (d) surgical waiting times?

ANSWER:

I thank the Honourable Member for Logan for his question.

I am pleased to advise that the Newman Government has overseen the following substantial service improvements at Logan Hospital to support the burgeoning communities of Logan City and the Scenic Rim Shire:

Midwifery Services

Recently, Logan Hospital consolidated and relocated most of its community based midwifery led antenatal clinics back to Logan Hospital to create a new multi-disciplinary all risk antenatal clinic for the first time. While this means that some women will have to travel further for their care, this is outweighed by the improvements in services the new clinic represents.

The advantages of the new clinic, which commenced on 3 February 2014, include:

- all women have access to a midwife, an obstetrician and other members of the multi-disciplinary team for the first time at each appointment throughout their pregnancy. In the community clinics, only low risk women had access to antenatal care provided by a midwife, while women of medium and high clinical risk women only had the opportunity to see their obstetrician at the hospital;
- reduced travel time for midwives translates into an additional 46 appointments each week, giving more women greater access to midwives;
- the new clinics provide one point of antenatal care. This gives women access to midwives and obstetricians in one location, with immediate access to referrals for specialists and to emergency care if needed;
- the in-hospital antenatal clinic is fully equipped to provide antenatal procedures at the point of the appointment, negating the need to attend the maternity assessment unit and other areas of the hospital for most diagnostics and procedures;
- concerns about the progression of a pregnancy can be escalated to a consultant at the time of the woman's antenatal appointment, rather than waiting for a separate outpatient referral;
- continuity of care is enhanced because the same midwives and obstetricians work the same clinics at the same time wherever possible. This enables women to see the same multidisciplinary team throughout their pregnancy;
- greater professional satisfaction for midwives who will be able to use the full scope of their antenatal skill by seeing low, moderate and high risk pregnancies.

These new clinics are also being redesigned to better meet the specific needs of people and communities who traditionally have more difficulty accessing mainstream health services for a variety of reasons. These include young mothers, Muslim women, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and women for whom English is a second language.

I am also pleased to advise that the first baby in 12 years was born at Beaudesert Hospital at 5:10am on Tuesday, 18 February 2014, thanks to the commitment made by this Government to reintroduce birthing and procedural services to Beaudesert Hospital by 1 July 2014. The service will formally commence on Monday, 3 March 2014, four months ahead of schedule. 220 low risk mothers have already enrolled to give birth at Beaudesert Hospital in 2014, which has the capacity to deliver at least 400 women a year. This will mean that many of the 800 expectant mums a year who live in the Beaudesert Hospital catchment will no longer have to travel to Logan Hospital, Gold Coast Hospital and other private and public hospitals throughout Brisbane to give birth if they no longer wish to do so. Apart from being a terrific outcome for the local community, this development will have two important additional benefits.

One of these is the additional capacity this new service will provide to Logan Hospital's very busy maternity service, which is nearing its capacity with approximately 3,500 births a year. Approximately half of expectant mums from the Jimboomba and Beaudesert areas currently give birth at Logan Hospital. The ability for many of these women to give birth at Beaudesert Hospital instead will help to meet the needs of the burgeoning population of Logan City well into the future.

The other major benefit of the successful reintroduction of birthing services at Beaudesert is that the service provides a blueprint for the reintroduction of much needed, similar services throughout rural and regional Queensland, a major policy commitment of the Government.

Logan Hospital is also currently in the process of introducing an additional model of care for women living in Logan City in the form of access to the hospital by eligible private midwives. The hospital already has formal agreements in place with local private midwives to ensure good continuity of care and specialist advice for antenatal care. This further development will mean that these same women will have the option of being delivered at the hospital by their private midwife if they choose to do so, with the comfort of knowing that the full suite of public hospital services will be available, should things not go according to plan.

Finally, from October 2013 women living in the Logan area have had access to the extended Mums and Bubs home visiting program, irrespective to the hospital in which they gave birth. This means that these mothers are eligible to receive an additional home visit at two and four weeks following the birth of their baby. This is thanks to the additional \$1.25 million in additional funding provided to Metro South Hospital and Health Service to introduce this program in South Brisbane, Logan City, Redland City and Beaudesert. The program is coordinated by the Greater South Brisbane Medicare Local and brokered out to midwives working in the local area.

Emergency Department Performance

Logan Hospital managed 74,797 patient presentations over the course of 2013, making it officially the busiest emergency department in Queensland. There was also a 9% increase in presentations in the same 12 months, a trend that is predicted to continue. Despite these very substantial challenges I am pleased to be able to congratulate Logan Hospital's hard working doctors, nurses and allied health staff on their tireless efforts in nonetheless achieving a significant increase in service performance. According to the *2013 Annual Performance of public Emergency Departments in Queensland Report*, Logan residents are now waiting less time to be seen than ever before in just 12 months, with:

- the proportion of patients being seen within their triage category times improving from 60% to 71%;
- the median waiting time to be seen decreasing from 24 minutes to 19 minutes; and
- the proportion of patients being seen and discharged or admitted to the hospital within four hours increasing from 58% to 70%.

I am also pleased to say that there is also welcome relief for their hard work and dedication on the horizon, with the new, expanded emergency department scheduled in open in August 2014. Part of the current \$145 million redevelopment of Logan Hospital, this very large new department with a floor space of 4,700 square metres and be almost three times the size of the existing department. It will also include a number of new features including an in-house medical imaging service, a separate children's waiting and treatment area and an eight bed children's short stay unit.

Patient Off-stretcher Time

The time taken to transfer a patient from an ambulance stretcher to the emergency department is called patient off-stretcher time. Hospital performance is measured as the percentage of patients transferred off the ambulance stretcher within 30 minutes of the ambulance arriving.

Logan Hospital has demonstrated a substantial Improvement in this area, with 83% of patients being transferred from the stretcher into the care of emergency staff within the 30 minute target. This is up from 72% in 2012.

Logan Hospital has also substantially redesigned its models of care in its inpatient units, largely eliminating inpatient bed block as a reason for delays in patient off-stretcher times even during the traditionally busy time of winter. This means that beds are normally available whenever the emergency department requires them.

Like emergency department waiting times, patient off-stretcher times should improve even further following the opening of the Logan Hospital Redevelopment in August 2014.

Elective Surgery Performance

Logan Hospital is currently working to meet its National Elective Surgery Targets. Metro South Hospital and Health Service was forced to reduce elective surgery at each of its major hospitals to address an \$18.5 million reduction in Commonwealth hospital funding announced retrospectively by the then Labor Government in November 2012. However, Logan Hospital is now in the position to turn this around with the provision of an additional \$13.4 million in November 2013.

The full re-opening of its normal operating capacity in December 2013 was followed by the opening of its eighth theatre for the first time in the hospital's history on 13 January 2014. Logan Hospital has also completed a major review of the productivity of its theatres. The review will shortly result in the implementation of a number of additional measures designed to increase the number of operations that can be performed each day in each theatre.

With these and other measures in place, I am confident that Logan Hospital will reduce the current number of long wait patients from 136 on 31 January 2014 to zero by 30 June 2014, achieving the National Elective Surgery Target in the process.