

**Question on Notice**  
**No. 45**  
**Asked on 12 February 2014**

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

QUESTION:

Will the Minister advise how hospital services for children are being improved in Metro North HHS ahead of the closure of the Royal Children's Hospital and subsequent transfer of these services to the new Queensland Children's Hospital?

ANSWER:

I thank the Honourable Member for Pine Rivers for his question.

I am pleased to report that the Metro North Hospital and Health Service has improved services to mitigate the risk of increased demand for services once the Royal Children's Hospital closes and services are transferred to the Lady Cilento Children's Hospital.

The Chief Executive Officers of the Metro North and Children's Health Queensland Hospital and Health Services are working collaboratively to resolve issues such as workload and demand on paediatric services, especially the Children's Emergency Department at The Prince Charles Hospital and Child and Youth Mental Health Services.

There have been many examples of improvements at facilities within the Metro North Hospital and Health Service, including:

- At Caboolture Hospital:
  - a new Paediatric Short Stay Unit with five beds has opened;
  - in March 2014, a behavioural assessment clinic for children will open;
  - Metro North Brisbane Medicare Local is working with the Children's Service to improve access to outpatient appointments; and
  - consultation is occurring with the Royal Children's Hospital to offer surgical services at Caboolture Hospital.
- At The Prince Charles Hospital:
  - the Children's Emergency Department saw over 17,600 children during 2013, its first full calendar year of operation;
  - there are six funded treatment spaces in the Children's Emergency Department, with capacity for another six;
  - there are currently eight funded beds in the inpatient ward with capacity for another 12; and
  - for the period July 2013 to January 2014, waiting times in the Children's Emergency Department are consistently better than the national targets, with 94% of all children admitted to hospital within the four hour standard, the national target rate is 83%.
- At the Redcliffe Hospital:
  - six short stay beds and associated paediatric unit remodelling work is complete;
  - construction of the new outpatient consulting area has commenced, with a projected

completion date of April 2014, which will provide a better purposed area for outpatient consulting;

- improvements to the paediatric waiting area in the Emergency Department have been completed;
- a clinical nurse consultant role has been added to work between the inpatient unit and the Emergency Department, facilitating specialist care provision and improved patient flow.

These builds in Redcliffe are expected to provide the following benefits to patients:

- decreased waiting times for inpatient care (particularly for short stay admissions);
- decreased Emergency Department treatment time;
- improved access to allied health support; and
- improved outpatient facilities.