

**Question on Notice**  
**No. 494**  
**Asked on 4 June 2015**

MR PEARCE asked the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services (HON C R DICK)—

How will Queensland Health workers benefit from Labor's election commitment to remove gag clauses from Queensland Health contracts?

ANSWER:

I thank the Honourable Member for Mirani for his question.

When I became Minister, I immediately engaged with the community to hear what the health sector had to say about the services provided to Queenslanders. I listened to the opinions of nurses, doctors, community and non-government organisations about the operation of our state's public health system, including ways it might be improved. For most of them, this was something of a novelty, after their experience of the way the previous LNP government had acted.

As the then Minister for Health, the Leader of the Opposition placed in the service agreements between Queensland Health and any organisation which received over 50 per cent of its funding from the state Government, clauses which read:

*“where the organisation receives 50% or more of its total funding from Queensland Health and other Queensland Government agencies, the organisation must not advocate for state or federal legislative change.”*

*“The organisation must also not include links on their website to other organisations' websites that advocate for state or federal legislative change.”*

This was an extraordinary attempt by the previous Health Minister and LNP government to control public debate by silencing criticism of the then government and its administration of the health portfolio.

I am proud that as a Labor Government we delivered on an election commitment to reverse this punitive measure.

I have written to the 63 organisations that had this condition imposed on them to let them know they are free to advocate for the state and federal changes they feel will benefit both our state and federal health systems.