

Question on Notice

No. 1027

Asked on 23 August 2018

MR C BOYCE asked the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services (HON DR S MILES) –

QUESTION

Will the Minister advise why Theodore Hospital maternity has been demoted to only being allowed to deliver emergency births, which are potentially much more hazardous to the mother and baby than the low risk births which the hospital is no longer permitted to deliver?

ANSWER

I am advised that there has been no change to the status of Theodore Hospital. It has been a level 1 maternity service, able to accommodate imminent birth only, since 2011. The Central Queensland Hospital and Health Service (CQHHS) has decided that it should remain a level one service, continuing to provide a service for imminent births. The decision was based on a range of factors including:

- Numbers of births including those in the wider Banana Shire area.
- Geographical location.
- Availability of suitably trained obstetric, anaesthetic and paediatric medical officers.
- Recency, currency and maintenance of clinician skills.
- Consideration for all women in Banana Shire.
- Recruitment and retention of medical and midwifery staff to rural areas.

The CQHHS is committed to the delivery of safe and sustainable services and this has been the primary factor in the decision regarding planned birthing at Theodore.

The CQHHS is committed to supporting women to give birth closer to home, and has strengthened the rural birthing service at Biloela so women with low risk who have previously had to travel into Rockhampton or Gladstone, can now birth more locally at Biloela.

Furthermore, the CQHHS has committed to working with the medical and midwifery staff at Theodore to develop a collaborative midwifery group practice model of care that will offer continuity across the whole continuum of maternity care, including the provision of a known midwife for intrapartum care.