

## Question on Notice

No. 737

Asked on 27 May 2021

**MR S KNUTH** ASKED THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND AMBULANCE SERVICES (HON Y D'ATH) –

### QUESTION

With reference to the Tully hospital which does not have a dialysis chair and the 7 Tully residents who require constant dialysis treatment but have to travel an hour and a half to Innisfail and back to receive this life saving treatment—

Will the Minister install a dialysis chair in Tully hospital to improve the quality of life for local residents requiring constant treatment?

### ANSWER

I am advised the Cairns and Hinterland Hospital and Health Service (CHHHS) regularly undertakes service planning to ensure services are planned and developed in a sustainable way, prioritised according to health need, to ensure the effective use of current and future resources.

The CHHHS continually monitors demand for renal dialysis services, and an in-centre satellite dialysis service will always be taken into consideration with any future service planning.

While acknowledging the Tully residents who require dialysis, I am advised that at present, there is not currently the demand in Tully to safely provide an in-centre satellite dialysis service, given the training requirements for dialysis nurses.

While home dialysis treatments are options available for some residents, there are transport options available for residents who travel to Innisfail for dialysis treatment. This transport is subsidised through the Patient Travel Subsidy Scheme.

The Palaszczuk Government recognises the need to improve equity of access to kidney care for people living in Queensland. The Advancing Kidney Care 2026 Plan, launched in June 2019, supports the Palaszczuk government priority of improving the health outcomes for all Queenslanders and delivering care closer to home.

The Plan has seen additional investment to support kidney health care, including:

- The allocation of \$5 million additional recurrent funding from 2018-19 as part of a North Queensland package to expand and improve kidney services in the region. Cairns and Hinterland Hospital and Health Service was the recipient of \$1.37 million of this funding;
- The allocation of \$10 million additional recurrent funding from 2019-20 in the target areas of dialysis vascular access, home haemodialysis, transplant coordination, kidney supportive care and the Western Cape chronic kidney disease model. This has facilitated the recruitment of over 48 additional frontline staff. Cairns and Hinterland Hospital and Health Service was the recipient of \$1.18 million of this funding;
- The allocation of \$8.4 million additional recurrent funding from 2020-21 for state dialysis services, facilitating the recruitment of over 40 additional staff to

provide dialysis to over 100 additional patients. Cairns and Hinterland Hospital and Health Service was the recipient of \$0.45 million of this funding; and

- The allocation of \$400,000 additional recurrent funding from 2020-21 for the expansion of the Queensland Kidney Transplant Service clinical education and support model which includes support to North Queensland. Support of the Cairns region has included a face-to-face consultation meeting in September 2020 leading to increased virtual outreach transplant clinics and increased engagement with patients at education sessions. Funding has also enabled the development of multiple statewide kidney transplant care protocols.

These initiatives are providing better access to a range of care options available to patients with chronic kidney disease including peritoneal dialysis and haemodialysis at home, kidney transplants, and kidney supportive care. Considering each patient's individual situation and clinical condition, these may be choices for some patients as alternatives to in-centre haemodialysis.