

## Question on Notice

No. 923

Asked on 23 August 2023

**M J MCDONALD** ASKED MINISTER FOR HEALTH, MENTAL HEALTH AND AMBULANCE SERVICES AND MINISTER FOR WOMEN (HON S FENTIMAN)—

### QUESTION

Will the Minister advise what the Minister is doing to address the large volume of ramping of QAS vehicles and patients at the Ipswich Hospital?

### ANSWER

Over the past five years, the population of the West Moreton region has grown at almost double the rate of the rest of Queensland.

I am advised that since 2018–2019, annual presentations to West Moreton Hospital and Health Service (HHS) emergency departments (EDs) have risen by 15,340 people – an increase of 17.5 per cent. In that time, clinicians have witnessed a 24.7 per cent rise in higher acuity (categories 1-3) presentations.

37,237 ambulances arrived at West Moreton HHS EDs in the 2022-23 Financial Year. This is 1,575 more ambulances than arrived in the year prior.

Despite these massive increases in system demand, the hard working staff at West Moreton HHS have continued to deliver high quality care, with 100 per cent of the most serious patients seen immediately.

The Palaszczuk Government is supporting West Moreton HHS and other HHSs to tackle ramping and pressures on the healthcare system through our \$764 million *Putting Patients First* plan.

The *Putting Patients First* plan invests in a range of initiatives that will improve the flow of patients through hospitals and create additional bed capacity to deal with the rise in acute hospital presentations. This will address ramping by improving ED access and reducing wait times.

For the West Moreton region, this includes:

- opening the Ripley Satellite Hospital to provide urgent care closer to home for minor illnesses and injuries;
- partnering with the local Primary Health Network and the Commonwealth Government to support a Medicare Urgent Care Clinic in Ipswich;
- expanding the Queensland Ambulance Service Mental Health Co-responder model to support people experiencing mental health crises;
- funding to support a transit and discharge lounge at Ipswich Hospital;
- funding for improved access to mental health clinicians in ED;

- funding extended hours and increased allied health services on weekends, to increase discharge rates;
- funding to support a senior nurse commander role 24/7 in the Ipswich Hospital ED; and
- funding for improved access to the Medical Assessment and Planning Unit (MAPU) at Ipswich Hospital to improve the timeliness of medical patients transitioning from the Emergency Department to the unit.

In addition, the Department of Health is leading several major capital projects to ensure a sustainable health service and add capacity to the health network, including through construction of a new acute clinical services building at Ipswich Hospital delivering a further 200 beds under stage 2 of the Ipswich Hospital expansion.

West Moreton Health is a growing and innovative health service, with projects investing in patient outcomes such as early intervention and hospital avoidance models via preventive health, multi-disciplinary care and virtual care.