

Question on Notice

No. 800

Asked on 25 June 2025

MR M HEALY ASKED MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND AMBULANCE SERVICES (HON T NICHOLLS)—

QUESTION

With reference to the Sangster Review indicating that the Cairns Hospital expansion would be forecasted to cost \$628m, in contrast to the budget forecasting an allocation of only \$181m—

Will the Minister advise (a) why additional funding was not allocated, (b) will the project be delayed due to the difference in funding and (c) has the project been rescope in any way?

ANSWER

\$181 million has been allocated for the Cairns Hospital Expansion refurbishment project, which is expected to be delivered by 2027. The former government decided to progress only the refurbishment component of the Cairns Hospital Expansion, rather than the entire project, including the new surgical centre.

The former government's decision to progress only part of the Cairns Hospital Expansion was due to the \$378 million cost blowout resulting from mismanagement of the failed Capacity Expansion Program, as documented in the independent review of the failed Capacity Expansion Program, available online at www.plan.health.qld.gov.au. \$5.529 billion has been invested in the 2025-26 Budget to address cost overruns on projects under the former Labor government.

The Crisafulli Government is funding and delivering a rescope Cairns Hospital Expansion – Surgical Centre project, to deliver the full expansion required for the Cairns region. This project will include 40 new overnight beds, eight more than Labor had said they'd deliver but failed to progress.

This is in addition to the Crisafulli Government delivering the new Mental Health Unit at Cairns Hospital, which I officially opened on 22 January 2025.