



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**Main Committee**

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Blair Electorate: Health Services**

**SPEECH**

**Thursday, 17 September 2009**

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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## SPEECH

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**Questioner**  
**Speaker** Neumann, Shayne, MP

**Source** House  
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**Responder**  
**Question No.**

**Mr NEUMANN** (Blair) (12.03 pm)—I want to speak this afternoon about a health boost for the Ipswich community. In July this year, the federal Minister for Health and Ageing, Nicola Roxon, and I announced the funding contract with the University of Queensland to establish the \$2.5 million Ipswich GP Super Clinic, an agreement for which had been signed with the University of Queensland. I warmly commend the University of Queensland Ipswich Campus for its involvement.

Recently I was at the book launch of *Mines, Mills and Shopping Malls: Celebrating the Identity of Ipswich*. The UQ Boilerhouse Community Engagement Centre celebrated the identity of Ipswich, and it is a great facility. The purpose of the boilerhouse is to facilitate just and sustainable community outcomes. I commend the director, Associate Professor Michael Cuthill, and all those involved in that program and in the production of that book. Present on that occasion was Professor Alan Rix, Pro-Vice-Chancellor of the University of Queensland, as well as Professor Helen Chenery.

I also want to thank them very much for their assistance in what I hope will be a very good response in the Ipswich and West Moreton communities to the health forum which is being held, initiated by me, at the University of Queensland Ipswich Campus on 8 October 2009. I encourage all residents of the Ipswich and West Moreton area to come to the Health and Hospitals Reform Commission forum, which will examine the needs of the local community.

After many years of buck passing by the coalition, the Rudd government is certainly investing in health in the Ipswich area. We are part of the 34 GP superclinics across the country—a \$275 million program. Upon the election of the Rudd Labor government, Ipswich Hospital received considerable assistance. One of the first things we did upon our election was to invest in elective surgery and also to invest where the coalition government had disinvested—that is, in health and hospitals in the local area of Ipswich. For example, the \$1.7 million operating theatre which is being created and funded by the Rudd government and also the \$6.7 million extension to the emergency department are both good initiatives. Those investments are allied with the years of funding put forward by the Rudd Labor government as part of an election commitment for the after-hours clinic which is associated with the hospital and run by the Division of General Practice. I hope that on 8 October we will see representatives from the Division of General Practice, as well as from the local AMA, present at the Health and Hospitals Reform Commission review and forum at the University of Queensland.

The Ipswich GP superclinic will provide three distinct streams of care, including a standard GP service for the management of acute presentations, a chronic disease management service and a specialised mental health service to address a priority area among the needs of Ipswich. The GP superclinic will provide services from health professionals, including GPs, nurses and psychologists, and from other allied health professionals such as physiotherapists, dieticians, diabetes educators and podiatrists. It is expected that the service will include a pharmacy and pathology. The clinic will offer bulk-billed services for concession card holders, children under 16 years of age, and senior citizens over 65 years of age. The operating hours will not compete with the existing after-hours clinic that is currently servicing the Ipswich community, but there will be a strong focus in the GP superclinic in Ipswich on future primary health care and particularly allied health care in a holistic way for the people of Ipswich.

I also commend all those other organisations which sought funding for the effort they put into and for also seeing the need for services for the people of Ipswich. The local Division of General Practice, in conjunction with a number of other entities and educational institutions, did a survey some years ago and found that we had only one GP for every 1,609 people living in the Ipswich and West Moreton area. With the growth of Ipswich by 4.1 per cent in the last 12 months, that is also a challenge for us. Getting GPs in the local area is a big thing for the people of Ipswich. It is important for health and hospital reform and it is important to assist local people so that they can get the best health care. I commend the University of Queensland's Ipswich campus.