



Steven Miles

DEPUTY PREMIER OF QUEENSLAND

WORKING TOGETHER FOR QUEENSLAND

21 October 2020

Brooke Carter
Queensland Divisional Manager
Occupational Therapy Australia
By email: info@otaus.com.au

Dear Ms Carter

Thank you for your letter dated 8 September 2020 outlining Occupational Therapy Australia's priorities for the 2020 State Election. The Palaszczuk Labor Government's strong health response to the COVID-19 pandemic has meant that we can now start to deliver our plan for economic recovery.

We delivered a record \$19.2 billion health budget in 2019-20. We're building better hospitals and delivering more beds across Queensland.

We understand the relationship between staff engagement and clinical and organisational performance. High clinical engagement leads to more efficient services and improved quality and safety outcomes.

A re-elected Palaszczuk Labor Government is committed to ensuring that healthcare professionals are engaged in the planning, implementation and evaluations of health services across Queensland.

New hospital investment

Queensland Health delivers high quality care to Queenslanders every day. We will continue to fund our public health system to ensure that all Queenslanders have access to the best care.

If re-elected on 31 October 2020, the Palaszczuk Labor Government will invest \$265 million to deliver seven new innovative Satellite Hospitals across South East Queensland to help take the pressure off emergency departments and provide hospital care closer to home. This is part of a \$889 million infrastructure investment commitment that will provide new and better hospitals all over Queensland.

This forms part of our \$889 million infrastructure investment commitment to build new and better hospitals all over Queensland.

Other commitments include:

- business cases for the expansion of hospitals in Townsville, Mackay, Bowen and Moranbah;
- \$62 million Stage 1 expansion of Redlands Hospital, which will include a 32-bed ICU ward;
- \$52.9m towards new Cairns University Hospital. This will include a \$26 million expansion of the Cairns Hospital Emergency Department and \$800,000 to fit out a 12th operating theatre.

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- an extra \$25 million to deliver the expansion of the Townsville University Hospital, which will provide even better public healthcare for the region.

Funding for more health workers

Unlike the LNP, we will not make cuts to our public sector workforce. We have committed to growing the frontline public sector workforce through fiscally responsible measures, including our recent announcement of our plan to hire a record 9,475 frontline health staff in Queensland including 5,800 nurses, 1,500 doctors, 475 paramedics and 1,700 health professionals.

Occupational therapy access for veterans

Our ex-servicemen and women, who have given so much, deserve better. As you know, the Department of Veteran Affairs support schemes are regulated and administrated by the Federal Government.

The deficiencies in the DVA-administered assistance programs is something highlighted by Federal Labor and a re-elected Palaszczuk Labor Government commits to raising these issues with the Federal Government.

Occupational therapy in schools

The Palaszczuk Labor Government recognises the role that occupational therapists play in contributing to a student's ability to participate in education. We also recognise that there may be times when it is appropriate to enable NDIS providers to deliver supports at school. For those therapists working as NDIS providers, a policy and procedure is available outlining the responsibilities and processes relating to accessing schools. The school principal makes the final decision about whether these providers can deliver supports during school time. These procedures are outlined in the *National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) provider access to state schools procedure* and the related policy which can be accessed at:

<https://ppr.qed.qld.gov.au/education/management/Procedure%20Attachments/NDIS-provider-access-to-state-schools/NDIS-provider-access-to-state-schools.pdf>

<https://ppr.qed.qld.gov.au/pif/policies/Documents/NDIS-provider-access-to-state-schools.pdf#search=ndis>

All policies and procedures are regularly reviewed. A re-elected Palaszczuk Labor Government will consult with the Queensland Division of Occupational Therapy Australia during the review process for the policy and procedure.

Compulsory Third Party Insurance

Queensland has a stable, fair and affordable Compulsory Third Party (CTP) scheme with Queenslanders paying the second lowest CTP premium in the country. The scheme also provides largely unfettered common law benefits and early intervention and rehabilitation support for injured claimants. Ensuring CTP remains affordable for all motorists and preserves compensation entitlements for injured claimants is important.

A re-elected Palaszczuk Labor Government commits to ensuring innocently injured claimants receive fair compensation. There are no plans to change the CTP scheme as it currently operates in Queensland.

Workers' compensation scheme

We have a proud record of ensuring Queensland's workers' compensation scheme provides care and support for injured workers, has the lowest the premiums in the country and is financially sustainable. The setting of fees payable under Queensland's workers' compensation is undertaken by WorkCover Queensland. Reviews are generally undertaken on an annual basis.

We commit to ensuring Queensland's workers' compensation system supports injured workers to the fullest extent possible and pays fair and reasonable fees to the medical practitioners and allied health professionals who assess, treat and rehabilitate injured workers, whilst ensuring the ongoing viability of the scheme.

Our record on health stands in stark contrast to the LNP who sacked 4400 health staff, attacked doctors' pay and conditions and spent over \$500,000 a fortnight on highly priced contractors and consultants. Their \$77 million on consultants and advertising left 104,114 Queenslanders waiting for a specialist outpatient appointment beyond clinically recommended times.

Now is not the time to risk the LNP's cuts. Queensland's ongoing economic and health recovery requires leadership and stability, and Deb Frecklington and the LNP are a risk to our recovery.

I urge you to communicate this message with your members and supporters. Should the Palaszczuk Government be re-elected, we look forward to working with you for the benefit of all Queenslanders.

Yours sincerely



STEVEN MILES MP
Deputy Premier
Minister for Health
Minister for Ambulance Services