



# Ros BATES MP

LNP Member for Mudgeeraba

Shadow Minister for Health and Ambulance Services  
Shadow Minister for Women

29 October 2020

Ms Brooke Carter  
Queensland Divisional Manager  
Occupational Therapy Australia

Sent via email: [Brooke.Carter@otaus.com.au](mailto:Brooke.Carter@otaus.com.au)

Dear Ms Carter

## **Liberal National Party response to Occupational Therapy Australia's Call to Parties**

Thank you for your letter of 5 October in relation to Occupational Therapy Australia's state election key priorities. While the outcome of this election will determine who will lead Queensland through its first fixed four-year Parliamentary term, it is far more important than that. It is about Queensland's future and who is best placed to guide us through the biggest economic crisis in almost a century.

The LNP understands the importance of supporting our allied health professionals in providing world-class health services across the state and appreciates the work that your members do each and every day. As a nurse, I have a personal appreciation for the work of your members.

### LNP's economic plan

The LNP has a bold vision to make Queensland the economic powerhouse of Australia once again.

An LNP government will implement our economic plan for a decade of secure jobs, to get Queenslanders working again and lead Queensland out of the recession by stimulating the economy.

Unlike the Palaszczuk Labor Government, the LNP has a plan to boost Queensland's economy. More information about the plan is available at [www.lnp.org.au](http://www.lnp.org.au).

While it is true that economic uncertainty has never been so widespread in Queensland, it should not be forgotten that Queensland had the nation's highest unemployment, most bankruptcies and lowest business confidence prior to COVID-19. As such, the decision made by Annastacia Palaszczuk to cancel this year's budget was reckless, and with Queensland the only Australian jurisdiction to not have a budget, it means Labor is flying blind through the biggest economic crisis in almost a century.

The LNP's economic plan will get Queensland working again.

### Public health challenges

Providing patients with access to a world-class public health system no matter where they live is a key part of the LNP's economic plan to get Queensland working again. Building a stronger economy also ensures that governments provide more investment in health services and support our allied health professionals.



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We note that Occupational Therapy Australia has requested a future State Government to maintain funding for occupational therapy expertise in this setting and ensure these are not diluted to general roles. The LNP will maintain funding specific to occupational therapists so they can continue their specialised services while alleviating unnecessary pressure on our hospitals and health care workers.

In terms of increasing the number of healthcare workers, we have committed to delivering an extra 2530 nurses and midwives, 320 paramedics, 750 doctors and 840 allied health professionals, if elected. That is in addition to the existing workforce.

On the point of mental health, we would be happy to work with you on improving mental health services and ongoing availability of mental health occupational therapists.

## Support occupational therapist access to schools

If elected, we would ensure Education Queensland works with Occupational Therapy Australia to develop guidelines for occupational therapist access to schools that respects both the learning and privacy of students and the rights of disability access for children.

We care about children receiving the full support they deserve at school, which is why the LNP has announced to improve student welfare and provide extra support services in schools to take the pressure off hard-working teachers and parents. As part of the plan, we would invest \$15m to expand chaplaincy services to an additional 240 state schools and a further \$5m to support school-based anti-bullying initiatives as well as increased use of guidance officers.

## Other issues

The LNP is committed to maintaining an affordable compulsory third party (CTP) scheme in Queensland. We have no plan to reduce access to common law rights of CTP claimants. As such, no injured Queensland motorist will be disadvantaged by any reforms to Queensland's CTP insurance scheme.

We will also ensure that occupational therapy services remain sustainable under Queensland's worker's compensation scheme. That is why we will review fees to prevent the loss of experienced occupational therapists to the NDIS and NIISQ schemes which provide greater remuneration.

It is the LNP's priority to ensure Queenslanders have access to a world-class health system, no matter where they live.

Under an LNP Government, local hospital and health service boards would also be empowered to implement strategies to recruit and retain more health specialists in regional communities.

As part of the new recruitment drive, the LNP will empower local Hospital and Health Service boards to implement strategies to recruit and retain more health specialists in regional communities, with recruitment targets to measure performance.

This may involve promoting rural health opportunities to young graduates, enhancing career pathways for rural generalist trainees and exploring opportunities for rural GPs and allied health professionals in regional hospitals in partnership with local medical associations.



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As part of our plan to provide more health services in regional communities, an LNP Government will commission an urgent audit of accommodation provided through rural hospital and health services to consider upgrades that may boost local incentives.

Yours sincerely

**ROS BATES MP RN**

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