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Reducing waiting lists: more elective surgery

Thursday, January 22, 2004

Queensland's doctors, nurses and health professionals have achieved their best results on record.

In 2003 they:

- Met the national target of treating 95% of urgent patients within 30 days – which they have done in every quarter since 1998
- Recorded the shortest waiting times for semi-urgent patients ever, with 92.5% of patients getting their surgery on time

The independent Productivity Commission has examined each state's public hospitals and says Queensland's system is the most efficient and that we have achieved the shortest waiting times in the country.

Our doctors, nurses and other health professionals are to be congratulated for their achievements.

But while there is one person waiting too long for an operation, we have to do more.

That is why a re-elected Beattie Government will put in place the biggest attack on waiting times in our public hospital system that Queensland has ever seen.

This policy is designed to make the best public hospital system in Australia even better.

We have demonstrated over the last five and a half years our determination to improve on the problems that existed when the National-Liberal Government presided over waiting lists and times that were so bad they hid them away and made them a State secret.

- Our last Budget put about 50% more into health than the National-Liberal Government.
- Last year there were about 7,000 more elective surgery operations on public hospital patients than in 1997-98.
- Despite extra demand, the number of people on the waiting lists is about 3,000 less now than under the National-Liberal Government.

Further reducing waiting times for elective surgery is a vital issue for Queenslanders.

A re-elected Beattie Labor Government will commit a massive \$110 million over the next three and a half years to treat about 18,000 extra elective patients within the times recommended by doctors.

We will make \$20 million of this funding available immediately to address elective surgery backlogs by July 2004, and we will bring the private sector in to partner with us to reduce this backlog.

Private sector hospitals will be asked to partner us to reduce elective surgery waiting lists. This will allow us to deliver more non-urgent operations such as cataract surgery and joint replacements, as well as maintaining and improving our urgent and semi-urgent performance.

Related files

- Reducing waiting lists: more elective surgery (.pdf, 155.03KB)

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Policy 2004



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AUTHORISED CAMERON MILNER ALP 16 PEEL STREET SOUTH, BRISBANE QLD 4101

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surgery and joint replacements, as well as maintaining and improving our urgent and semi-urgent performance.

Our commitments at a glance

Over the next three and a half years, a re-elected Beattie Government will spend \$110 million to cut waiting list times. Our initiatives are:

- \$20 million to be made available over the next five months to target waiting lists if the Government is returned. We will negotiate with private hospitals to buy services where the public system is at capacity
- \$7.5 million for an extra 3,000 cataract operations shared with the private sector, and two additional ophthalmology specialist training positions
- \$47 million for public patients across the state, based on the demand for surgery
- \$15 million for an extra 900 joint replacement procedures across the State, including hip replacements and knee reconstructions
- \$3 million for additional orthopaedic surgery, especially joints, on the Sunshine Coast at Noosa Hospital
- \$6 million to commission a second operating theatre at Caloundra Hospital and 10 extra beds. This will mean greater numbers of Sunshine Coast residents getting their surgery on time
- \$3 million to address the problem of some patients not being fit for surgery causing postponements. Strategies will include weight loss programs, improved cardio vascular fitness, assistance to stop smoking
- Introduce an independent audit of the State's public hospital waiting lists
- \$2.5 million to employ a specialist ENT surgeon and tackle long wait Ear, Nose and Throat elective procedures at Cairns Hospital (announced earlier)
- \$1.5 million to employ six new nurses and open an extra critical care bed at Cairns taking the number to 16. This will relieve pressure on the emergency department and improve waiting times for elective surgery (announced earlier)
- \$4.5 million to establish a full specialist vascular surgery service at Nambour Hospital which will include staff specialists and visiting surgeons, and two dedicated nursing support staff. This will improve waiting times and allow major vein and artery surgery on the Sunshine Coast

These commitments and other policies already announced, guaranteeing the employment of 1500 extra nurses, a \$15 million boost to cardiac services and establishing an Emergency Department and 120 new beds at Prince Charles Hospital in Brisbane, will all have a major impact on waiting lists.

Building on our record

Since 1998, we have strived to provide for better services and better health care for all Queenslanders.

Under the Beattie Government, Queensland has the shortest waiting times for elective surgery in Australia.

That's not just our claim, that's what an independent audit of national waiting list figures by the Productivity Commission found.

The Beattie Government has also:

- Delivered on a promise to publish elective surgery waiting lists every quarter since 1998 – which, if re-elected, we will continue to do
- Delivered 7,000 more elective surgery operations on public hospital patients in 2003, than when the Coalition left office in 1998
- Despite treating thousands more patients, the number of people on the waiting list decreased from 36,260 in 1998 to 33,240 at December 31, 2003. This is the lowest figure on record.
- Continued to perform more elective surgery, with 2,200 more operations in the last six months of 2003, compared with the same period the year before
- A new Emergency Department committed at Robina on the Gold Coast and upgrades to Emergency Departments at Redcliffe and Redlands will free up staff and beds for more elective surgery at these hospitals

The Beattie Labor Government has continued to increase its spend on health.

We understand that one patient waiting too long for surgery is one patient too many.

The health budget for 2003/04 is a record \$4.6 billion. The 2003/04 budget committed an extra \$2.6 billion over the next four years for health. This, combined with the Beattie Government's health policies for this election, will maintain access to world class services and care.

It should never be forgotten that Coalition governments in this State have never been honest enough to publish waiting lists.

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Reducing Deaths and Disabilities from Stroke

Tuesday, February 03, 2004

Stroke is Australia's third biggest killer.

This year in Queensland, about 8,000 people will have a stroke. About 2200 people - 900 men and 1300 women - will die from a stroke.

One third of stroke victims will be left permanently disabled. They may spend the rest of their lives with a degree of paralysis of one side of the body, communication difficulties, or a range of other problems that reduce their quality of life, and that of their families.

High blood pressure is the single most important risk factor for stroke, and many of the causes of stroke are preventable and related to lifestyle.

A re-elected Beattie Government will spend \$18 million on the prevention and treatment of stroke, and the rehabilitation of Queensland stroke sufferers over the next three years.

Our commitments at a glance

- \$750,000 for an education campaign to raise public awareness of the risk factors for stroke
- \$1.5 million to provide Rural Stroke Outreach Services which will allow specialist stroke teams (a doctor, a nurse and an allied health staffer) based in Cairns, Townsville and Brisbane. The team will use telehealth technology to link with patients and staff in rural hospitals and provide expert advice on treatment and care for thousands of Queenslanders
- \$3 million to establish an Acute Stroke Unit at the Townsville Hospital, to include a new specialist stroke doctor, specialist nurse, a physiotherapist, occupational therapist and a researcher. This unit will provide specialist stroke treatment and early rehabilitation for about 1000 stroke patients in North Queensland
- \$3 million to buy 150 specialist neuro coils to prevent stroke occurring or to reduce the impact of stroke after a brain haemorrhage. These devices, costing \$20,000 each, shore up weaknesses in arteries which may otherwise bleed into the brain, causing disability or death
- \$9 million to establish five community-based stroke rehabilitation teams (three physiotherapists, two occupational therapists, a speech pathologist and two therapy assistants). Teams will be based in the Logan, Redcliffe/Caboolture, Sunshine Coast, Mackay and Fraser Coast health districts
- \$750,000 to deliver eight education seminars across the state to inform General Practitioners of the latest prevention and management techniques for stroke
- \$900,000 extra for anti-smoking campaigns (already announced).

Related files

- Reducing Deaths and Disabilities from Stroke Policy (.pdf, 137.15KB)

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Building on our record

Since 1998, the Beattie Government has undertaken a range of initiatives to address the problem of stroke.

Programs to reduce the risk of stroke, by addressing risk factors such as smoking, poor nutrition and diabetes have included:

- \$145,000 Indigenous Smoke-Free Program that targets tobacco use in communities by involving GPs and Indigenous community health workers
- \$250,000 for media awareness campaigns and telephone support as a continued commitment to the QUIT campaign
- \$2 million to employ 27 new nutritionists who are working with communities including Cairns, Mount Isa, Wujal Wujal, Hervey Bay, and Rockhampton to help address obesity, a cause of stroke
- \$200,000 for a diabetes specialist to provide an outreach service for Indigenous communities in Cape York and the Torres Strait
- \$150,000 for the successful physical activity project *10,000 Steps in Rockhampton*
- Establishment of the Focused Intensive Rehabilitation Service and Treatment (FIRST) for High Risk Elders at the Townsville Hospital with annual funding of \$500,000 to provide specialist medical, nursing and allied health staff
- 30 rehabilitation beds at the Robina Hospital for people with neurological problems, including people with acquired brain injury through stroke
- \$500,000 to establish an integrated stroke and rehabilitation service in Cairns.

[X Close Window](#)

Better Access to Renal Care

Sunday, February 01, 2004

Increasing rates of diabetes and hypertension are causing more and more Queenslanders to suffer end stage renal disease, a condition in which the kidneys are no longer able to function at a level necessary for day to day life.

Due to a shortage of organ donors, more than 1,200 Queenslanders now rely on renal dialysis to manage their condition and maintain a quality of life. This number is growing by 8% a year. In the indigenous community the incidence of end stage renal disease is 7 to 10 times that of the general population.

Dialysis is delivered through a renal chair which contains specialised equipment which temporarily takes the place of the kidney and cleanses the blood. It is an all-consuming treatment that can be particularly demanding if there are long distances to travel. Patients must attend their dialysis site three times a week, sometimes for up to six hours at a time.

It is a big imposition that makes it difficult to meet family and work commitments.

A re-elected Beattie Labor Government will deliver additional dialysis units, more renal chairs and more renal nurses closer to where people live, significantly improving their quality of life.

Our Commitments at a glance

- \$33.8 million extra over three years to provide high quality renal services
- About 120 more Queenslanders will have treatment close to home
- 57 additional renal chairs
- 19 extra renal nurses across the State.

Related files

- [Better Access to Renal Care Policy \(.pdf, 133.98KB\)](#)

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- \$33.8 million extra over three years to provide high quality renal services
- About 120 more Queenslanders will have treatment close to home
- 57 additional renal chairs
- 19 extra renal nurses across the State.

Initiatives include:

- \$7.38 million to establish and operate a nine chair renal dialysis unit at Redlands Hospital, employing five new renal nurses
- \$5.3 million to establish and operate an eight chair dialysis unit in the recently announced Sunshine Coast Community Health Centre, employing four extra nurses
- \$6.3million to employ four new nurses and open eight additional chairs for the Gold Coast renal service
- \$2.83 million for an extra four chairs at the Rockhampton renal service and to employ two extra nurses and a skilled indigenous health worker
- \$3.4 million to establish and operate at Cooktown a four bed satellite renal service, linked to Cairns, to also service Hope Vale and Wujal Wujal. Two new nurses will be employed
- \$3.4 million to establish and operate a four chair satellite service for the Torres Strait, based on Thursday Island, linked to Cairns and employing two extra nurses
- \$2.94 million for 20 self-care dialysis units to be placed in sites around the State, with locations to be finalised by the end of June. Self-care units are for patients who are able to manage their own dialysis either at home or at a nearby community health centre
- \$500,000 for telehealth services – using technology to link city-based renal specialists with people in regional and rural centres
- \$250,000 for specialised clinical training for renal services
- \$1.5 million to undertake the surgery necessary to prepare renal patients for connection to dialysis machines.

Building on our record

The Beattie Government has made a strong commitment to expanding renal services and providing those services closer to where people live.

The 2003-04 budget allocated an extra \$13.1 million to address growth in demand and provide additional services, including:

- \$950,000 for renal services for Sunshine Coast Health Service District
- \$800,000 for renal services on the Gold Coast
- \$2 million for renal dialysis in the Cairns area to meet demand on hospital inpatient and home-based services.
- \$2 million for renal dialysis in the Townsville area to meet demand of hospital inpatient and home-based services
- \$150,000 to employ a Director of Renal Medicine at Townsville to allow more extensive outreach services
- \$1.175 million for renal services for Princess Alexandra Hospital
- \$500,000 for renal services for Logan Beaudesert Health Service District
- \$1.4 million to support renal services at Toowoomba Hospital.

The Beattie Government has also provided:

- \$648,000 for construction of a renal unit at Weipa Hospital, phase one of a 10 year project to provide renal services for the Cape York and Torres Strait region
- \$1.9 million purpose built renal dialysis service at Ipswich Hospital campus
- \$800,000 for the Mount Isa renal unit.

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A Healthy Boost for Emergency Departments

Wednesday, January 28, 2004

The Commonwealth Government's systematic dismantling of Medicare is having a profound impact on Queensland's public hospitals.

Under the Liberal-National coalition, the number of GPs prepared to bulk-bill has fallen dramatically.

This is hitting thousands of Queenslanders, among them pensioners and parents of young children. Unable to find a doctor who bulk-bills, they are turning to emergency departments in record numbers.

Over the past three years, 110,000 more patients have attended public hospital emergency departments – a 13% jump.

In that time 450,000 patients attended for non-urgent complaints that could have been attended to by a GP if one was available and affordable.

At the same time, rates for bulk billing have plummeted more quickly in Queensland than in any other state. Latest Commonwealth figures show only 64% of consultations with Queensland GPs last year were bulk-billed, compared to the national rate of 67%. Three years ago, the Queensland rate was 72%.

With bulk-billing GPs harder to find, the number of GP visits has dropped by about 5% since 2000 – despite our state's rapid population growth.

General practice, bulk-billing and Medicare are entirely matters for the Commonwealth, but Queensland's public hospitals wear the consequences of enormous additional pressure.

The Queensland Government has played its part in meeting this increasing demand by bringing down record health budgets every year in office.

However, to ensure people get the treatment they deserve, more needs to be done.

We have pledged that if we are re-elected we will invest \$77 million to build the first full-scale emergency department at The Prince Charles Hospital on Brisbane's Northside. The investment will also add 120 hospital beds, and we will spend \$30m each year to employ 200 more staff at Prince Charles.

If the Beattie Government is re-elected, much more will be done.

We will invest \$34.5 million to establish a state-wide health advice hotline, provide extra staff for emergency service departments and pilot bulk-billing GP clinics to relieve the pressure on public hospital emergency departments, reduce waiting times and deliver excellent care.

Related files

- A Healthy Boost for Emergency Departments Policy (.pdf, 145.30KB)

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24-hour health advice

A re-elected Beattie Labor Government will provide \$25 million to establish a 24-hour, seven-day-a-week, state-wide health hotline to give easy access to health advice and information about the most appropriate and accessible services.

The service will be based in Queensland and be accessible to all Queenslanders, with one central number.

It will give advice on the type of care available, where it is available and when you need it.

This initiative will free up resources which we can redirect to care for people who need to visit hospital.

For example, parents of a child with a high temperature in the middle of the night will be able to ring the hotline for advice, rather than wake the entire family for a midnight trip to a busy emergency department.

The advice could include simple self-care at home, or seeing a GP, or making your way to an emergency department if a condition warrants it.

The hotline will have information on the services with the shortest waiting times, the most convenient locations and most suitable opening hours. Callers will remain free at all times to use the doctor or service they choose.

We will ensure fast access to the most appropriate health care, 24-hours a day, seven days a week.

We're committing up to \$10 million per year once operational, plus \$10 million in capital funds to buy hardware, software and operational protocols. We hope to have the service up and running by the end of 2005.

The hotline will be staffed by fully-trained nurses, backed up by doctors.

Quality of care will be paramount, with nurses giving advice according to strict and proven protocols.

Opportunities may exist to rotate emergency nurses between emergency departments and the hotline. Additional employment opportunities will also exist for nurses re-entering the workforce.

Similar services are operating in the United States and the United Kingdom, and one has been operating in Western Australia since 1999, handling in that time around 845,000 calls.

The Western Australian Government estimates only half of the callers who planned to visit an emergency department went on to attend after contacting the hotline.

More emergency staff

Labor will:

- **Allocate an extra \$4.5 million over three years to employ 20 additional emergency department nurses at some of the state's busiest emergency departments, including Royal Brisbane, Princess Alexandra, Cairns, Gold Coast, Logan, Caboolture, Townsville, Redlands, Redcliffe and Hervey Bay**
- **Spend an extra \$2 million over three years to employ additional emergency department doctors at sites throughout the state.**

Better access to GPs

Labor will:

- **Set up four pilot bulk-billing GP clinics located near public hospitals, including two in regional Queensland.**

The clinics will have GPs available after hours and on weekends, when doctors are hardest to find.

The four pilot sites will be established in areas of greatest need, where GP-type attendances at emergency departments run at more than 50% and bulk-billing rates are low.

A total of \$3 million over three years will be available for practice support at the four trial clinics, to subsidise costs - for example, to employ practice nurses and subsidise rent.

In exchange for bulk-billing, we will provide rent-free use of space near a hospital.

This will be done in consultation with local health groups and will be dependent on the Federal Government allowing these GPs to access the Medicare rebate.

Building on our record

Queensland's public hospital emergency departments are integral to our world-class health care system. Since 1998, through six consecutive record budgets, the Beattie Government has invested to improve our emergency departments.

This work includes:

- **Achieving 90% of patients requiring admission being admitted within eight hours after treatment and observation in emergency departments.**

(NSW achieved only 73% in the same timeframe, Victoria only 84% within 12 hours)

- Achieving 99.3% of category 1 emergency patients being seen by a doctor immediately
- Completing the rebuilding of 24 new emergency departments and refurbishing nine across the State
- Employing 33 extra emergency doctors and 15 more nurses at our busiest hospitals including Townsville, Redcliffe, Caboolture, Gold Coast and Royal Children's Hospital
- Committing \$9 million to establish an emergency department and intensive care services at the Robina Hospital
- Committing \$13.5 million to upgrade of Redcliffe Hospital's emergency department
- Committing \$4.2 million to expand Redland Hospital's emergency department
- Increasing medical staff at Nambour Hospital's emergency department from 6 to 11
- Doubling Caloundra Hospital's emergency department doctors to eight.

☒ Close Window**Better Dental Care**

Saturday, January 24, 2004

Queensland has the largest and most comprehensive free dental service in Australia. Our dentists, nurses and technicians deliver excellent dental care to hundreds of thousands of people who qualify for a free service, including school children, pensioners, students and many families.

Through an investment of \$120 million a year, these services are provided by 180 mobile dental clinics, 121 school clinics and 140 community dental clinics. We provide a total of 800 dental chairs.

Queensland is the only Australian State that funds the full free public dental services, which the Howard Government stopped funding. We will continue to fight for the Commonwealth to again play its part in providing dental services to Queenslanders.

While nearly all dental emergencies are dealt with on the same day in Queensland, Labor acknowledges that in some areas of the State people wait too long for general appointments.

We will commit an extra \$10 million over three years to deliver at least 18,000 additional treatments.

Our policy will go a long way to reducing the wait for free dental care, especially in population growth hot spots, and regions where the national shortage of dentists makes it difficult to recruit.

Related files

- Better Dental Care (.pdf, 123.78KB)

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Commitments at a glance:

- \$3 million to establish two travelling dental teams, to be based in Brisbane and Townsville to deliver around 8,000 treatments. Each team will consist of two dentists, two dental assistants, and a dental technician. The Dental Outreach Teams will travel around the State to treat patients in existing facilities in regions finding it difficult to recruit dentists.
- \$3 million to provide 10,000 extra dental treatments in areas with the longest waits. Areas to be targeted are the Gold Coast, Sunshine Coast, Redlands/Logan/Beaudesert, Redcliffe/Caboolture, Townsville, Rockhampton and Wide Bay.
- \$2 million extra to extend public clinic hours to evenings and Saturday mornings, where this is possible.
- \$2 million to contract private dentists to treat dental emergencies when a public dentist is not available.

Building on our record

The Beattie Government has a proud record of delivering free, excellent dental care throughout Queensland. In just one year, 2002-03, we delivered:

- 230,000 emergency courses of care
- 117,000 general adult courses of care
- 560,000 school dental service visits.

We provided a site for the new Griffith University dental school at the Gold Coast Hospital campus. This new dental school will increase the number of dentists, oral hygienists and dental technicians in Queensland.

Labor has also established a dental call centre on the Gold Coast to ensure emergency cases get priority.

We passed legislation to allow dental therapists to work with dentists to treat public and private patients.

A \$600,000 project is under way to tackle tooth decay in young people by promoting good nutrition and dental hygiene.

[Close Window](#)

Further Improvements In Caring For Cancer Patients

Friday, January 23, 2004

Cancers kill 40,000 Australians a year and cause about one quarter of all deaths in Queensland. We have Australia's highest skin cancer rate, but 95 % of melanomas are treatable if detected early.

The Beattie Government has made major improvements in the provision of services to cancer sufferers. Key achievements include the \$28 million Radiation Oncology Services Plan 2000 and the establishment of the \$68 million Comprehensive Cancer Research Centre linked to the Queensland Institute of Medical Research.

But we recognise that governments must always be looking for ways of further improving services. If re-elected, the Beattie Government will fund a variety of measures over the next three years designed to further improve early cancer detection and treatment rates for Queenslanders.

We will invest an extra \$8.25 million dollars in new capital equipment.

We will increase ongoing spending for extra specialist staff and services for cancer prevention and treatment by \$31.5 million over three years. These investments will bring services closer to where people live.

Related files

- Further Improvements In Caring For Cancer Patients (.pdf, 136.15KB)

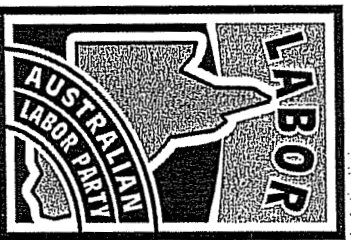
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FURTHER IMPROVEMENTS IN CARING FOR CANCER PATIENTS

Cancers kill 40,000 Australians a year and cause about one quarter of all deaths in Queensland. We have Australia's highest skin cancer rate, but 95 % of melanomas are treatable if detected early.

The Beattie Government has made major improvements in the provision of services to cancer sufferers. Key achievements include the \$28 million Radiation Oncology Services Plan 2000 and the establishment of the \$68 million Comprehensive Cancer Research Centre linked to the Queensland Institute of Medical Research.

But we recognise that governments must always be looking for ways of further improving services. If re-elected, the Beattie Government will fund a variety of measures over the next three years designed to further improve early cancer detection and treatment rates for Queenslanders.

We will invest an extra \$8.25 million dollars in new capital equipment.

We will increase ongoing spending for extra specialist staff and services for cancer prevention and treatment by \$31.5 million over three years. These investments will bring services closer to where people live.

Our commitments at a glance

- \$2 million to buy and install a new linear accelerator for Townsville Hospital
- \$940,000 a year for the linear accelerator running costs and specialist staff
- \$660,000 a year for specialist staff at the Royal Brisbane and Princess Alexandra hospitals
- \$5 million to buy, and \$7.5 million over three years to operate, the first public hospital PET (Positron Emission Tomography) scanner in Queensland
- \$7.2 million to cover increasing drug and treatment costs
- \$1 million a year for a public patients' radiation oncology service at Nambour
- \$500,000 a year for specialist dermatology services in regional areas and \$250,000 for diagnostic equipment
- \$500,000 a year to boost skin cancer awareness campaigns
- \$1 million a year for increased palliative care and pain management services
- \$1 million to upgrade the Queensland Cancer Registry and \$500,000 a year to establish comprehensive state-wide databases
- \$500,000 to perform 10 extra bone marrow transplants each year
- \$300,000 extra a year for anti-smoking campaigns from existing funding
- Establish an expert Ministerial Cancer Advisory Council.

Townsville Linear Accelerator

A re-elected Beattie Government will provide \$2 million to buy and install a new linear accelerator for radiation treatment of cancer sufferers in North and Far North Queensland.

Queensland Health has established two centres of excellence for cancer treatment for Queenslanders – one in Brisbane and the other in Townsville.

The new accelerator will take the total number of linear accelerators at Townsville Hospital to three.

We will also spend \$600,000 on staffing and running the new machine. There will be four new radiation therapists, a radiation oncologist and a nurse. The extra machine and staff will allow more than 300 extra patients a year from the northern half of the State to receive radiation therapy.

On top of this, there will also be a new senior cancer specialist position to enhance cancer care in North Queensland and a senior cancer treatment nurse.

Royal Brisbane & Princess Alexandra Hospitals

We will allocate \$660,000 for two new senior cancer specialists and two cancer nurses, to be based at the Royal Brisbane Hospital and Princess Alexandra Hospital, to help ensure better co-ordination of state-wide cancer care services.

We will spend \$5 million to purchase Queensland's first public hospital PET (Positron Emission Tomography) scanner.

A further \$7.5 million will be allocated over three years to operate the scanner.

This high technology diagnostic machine at the Royal Brisbane Hospital will provide a state-wide service and be capable of finding cancers not easily detected by current imaging technology such as CT and MRI scanners, enabling improved treatment for people with lung and other cancers.

Cancer drugs

A Beattie Government will provide an extra \$7.2 million over three years to meet the increasing costs of new and highly specialised drugs for cancer and leukaemia treatments, and to provide extra radiation services.

Nambour

We will spend \$1 million a year to establish a radiation oncology service for public patients at Nambour, including radiation therapy. This will mean 100 Sunshine Coast residents who would otherwise have to travel to Brisbane every year for treatment will be treated in Nambour.

Skin cancer

We will allocate \$250,000 for the latest video technology to improve access to skin cancer specialist advice and \$500,000 a year to employ specialist dermatologists to provide expert clinical advice and treatment. Equipment will be installed at Cairns, Townsville, Mackay, Mount Isa, Charters Towers, Longreach, Emerald, Charleville, Roma and the Cape/Torres region.

We will also provide an extra \$500,000 a year to boost awareness about skin cancers such as melanoma and basal cell carcinoma, especially in regional Queensland.

We will work with non-government organisations such as the Queensland Cancer Fund, the Divisions of General Practice, and the AMAQ, to promote sun-safe messages. Queensland has the highest rate of skin cancer, which includes melanoma, in the world. More than 2000 cases are diagnosed and more than 300 deaths occur each year, two thirds of these from melanoma.

95% of melanomas are treatable with early detection.

Palliative care

We will spend \$1 million extra a year to provide increased palliative care and pain management services at The Prince Charles and Royal Brisbane hospitals, in the Bayside district and at Townsville Hospital.

Cancer registry

We will allocate \$1 million to upgrade the Queensland Cancer Registry and \$500,000 a year to establish comprehensive state-wide databases to meet national cancer reporting requirements. This will result in a better understanding of the incidence of cancer in Queensland, leading to improved treatment planning and services.

Bone marrow transplants

A re-elected Beattie Government will provide an extra \$500,000 a year for an extra 10 bone marrow transplants each year in Queensland.

Health promotion

Smoking causes cancer and kills. An extra \$300,000 a year will be set aside from existing funding for targeted smoking prevention campaigns through Health Promotion Queensland.

Ministerial Cancer Advisory Council

This expert Council will advise the Government on emerging international technology, treatment, workforce and research developments. Members are expected to include leading researchers and clinicians.

Building on our record

The Beattie Government's \$28 million Radiation Oncology Services Plan 2000 resulted in a new radiation therapy unit at the Princess Alexandra Hospital and world-class cancer treatment equipment at the Mater, Princess Alexandra, Royal Brisbane and Townsville hospitals.

We established the \$68 million Comprehensive Cancer Research Centre linked to the Queensland Institute of Medical Research.

We have introduced new tobacco laws to ban smoking in restaurants. A review of these laws is underway and further measures will be considered once that review is complete.

In 2003-04 the Beattie Government is spending \$5 million – up from \$4 million the previous year - on cancer prevention strategies.

As a result of intensive lobbying by the Beattie Government, the Commonwealth agreed to fund an extra 15 university places for radiation therapists at the Queensland University of Technology. This will increase the number of graduate places in 2004 to 29.

[Close Window](#)

Healthier Heart Services

Saturday, January 17, 2004

Heart disease is a significant problem in our community and the Beattie Government is ensuring hospitals can provide an increasing range of services to meet increasing demand.

Queensland is recognised as having a world-class health system. In the last five and a half years the Beattie Government has made major improvements to cardiac services. *In building on our record*, and in line with our commitment to health, a re-elected Beattie Government will allocate \$15 million over three years to further improve cardiac services across the state.

Related files

- [Healthier Heart Services Policy \(.pdf, 124.47KB\)](#)

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Policy 2004

KEEPING QUEENSLAND MOVING



Peter Beattie & Labor

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Our commitments at a glance

We will provide an extra \$5 million each year for cardiac services across the state, including:

- \$2 million a year for 400 extra early intervention angiogram and stent procedures for heart patients;
- \$1.5 million a year for a new cardiac team at Brisbane's Princess Alexandra Hospital to increase the hospital's capacity by 50%;
- Improved access to cardiac services at Cairns, Townsville, Gold Coast and Brisbane's Prince Charles and Princess Alexandra hospitals so that more patients can receive diagnosis and treatment quicker;
- \$500,000 extra a year for more life-saving implantable defibrillators for patients at risk of sudden heart failure;
- \$1 million a year for prevention, fitness and cardiac rehabilitation programs.

Building on our record

The challenge is to provide services across the State as close as possible to where people live. Newly adopted national guidelines for interventional cardiac procedures emphasise an earlier timeframe for intervention.

The Prince Charles Hospital in Brisbane continues to enhance its reputation as a world-class cardiac hospital. In the past year it has undertaken Australia's first triple organ transplant.

Increasingly, other major Queensland hospitals are playing a part in providing cardiac services.

A new \$7 million cardiac catheter service at the Gold Coast Hospital, announced in October, will be operational this year, catering for up to 1200 patients a year who would otherwise have to travel to Brisbane.

An extra \$3.1 million was allocated in the 2003-2004 State Budget for cardiac services throughout Queensland, including:


- \$200,000 for Cairns;
- \$500,000 for Townsville;
- \$1.8 million for The Prince Charles Hospital;
- \$650,000 for the Princess Alexandra Hospital.

Next month, Townsville Hospital will have two staff interventional cardiac specialists able to do angioplasties, plus two visiting specialists.

Cairns Hospital is currently recruiting its first full-time staff specialist cardiologist.

The Beattie Government is committed to providing better hospitals, better services and better health care.



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Nursing


Saturday, January 17, 2004

A re-elected Beattie Government will employ 1500 new graduate nurses, clear the way for nurse practitioners and strengthen the Chief Nursing Advisor position to further improve the status of the profession.

The Government values the vital role nurses play in our world-class health system and is committed to recruiting and retaining nurses and providing them with better skills and career paths.

Related files

- Nursing Policy (.pdf, 145.04KB)

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Our commitments at a glance

- Employ 1500 new nurse graduates in an investment of around \$75 million over three years
- Provide an extra \$1m each year to employ the equivalent of 15 full-time school-based health nurses
- New funding for nursing research
- A strengthened role for the Chief Nursing Advisor
- Legislative changes to enable the permanent employment of nursing practitioners
- Continue current successful initiatives to recruit and train nurses

A re-elected Beattie Government will:

- Improve the status of the health advisory unit including the Chief Nursing Advisor, who will have direct access to the Minister and the Director-General on strategic issues. This recognises the value of nursing leadership.
- Invest \$128,000 in trials of nurse practitioners in areas such as women's health, child health, sexual health, immunisation and emergency medicine.
- Change legislation to enable nurse practitioners to be permanently employed in stand-alone roles.
- Employ the equivalent of 15 full-time additional school-based health nurses, through an investment of \$1 million. This will build on the 120 nurses currently delivering frontline health and early intervention services for young Queenslanders.
- Invest \$100,000 each year to sponsor nursing research projects, and build on current undergraduate and post-graduate nursing scholarships.
- Employ a further 1500 new graduates over the next three years. This will build on the achievement of employing more than 2860 nurse graduates since 1999.
- Continue current recruitment and retention initiatives, including:
 - Managing workloads through the Business Planning Framework
 - The Queensland Health Nursing Re-entry Assistance Scheme
 - The Queensland Health Preceptor Program to support new nursing staff in Queensland Health facilities
 - The Rural and Remote Nursing Relief Program.

Building on our record

The Beattie Government has employed more than 2860 nurse graduates since 1999. In our second term, our target of employing at least 1500 new graduates was surpassed, with 1780 nurse graduates placed in work. If elected for a third term, we will employ an additional 1500 graduates, which will take the total employed since 1999 to more than 4360.

The Government recognises and values the vital role nurses play in the delivery of our world-class health system. Nurses represent more than 40 per cent of the health workforce and are our front-line in clinical care, health management, education, research, health promotion and prevention.

It is essential that we have an ongoing commitment to recruiting and retaining nurses to ensure the maintenance of a quality health system.

The Beattie Government has undertaken a range of strategies to improve recruitment and retention of nurses. These include:

- Developing a nursing website www.thinknursing.com which hosts an internet recruitment campaign
- Establishing a Nursing Career Advisory Service to promote nursing as a career
- Creating the Queensland Health Nursing Re-entry Assistance Scheme to help nurses re-enter the Queensland Health workforce following periods of absence
- Providing undergraduate nursing scholarships:
 - * Fifteen rural scholarships each year
 - * Four Indigenous rural scholarships each year
- Developing the Business Planning Framework to address workload requirements
- Giving nurses more flexible rostering practices
- Providing post-graduate scholarships to assist with further education, with \$90,450 allocated to 47 nurses across the state in 2002 – a record number
- Developing a Rural and Remote Nursing Relief Program.

These investments have achieved good results with Queensland Tertiary Admissions Centre (QTAC) figures showing continuing increases in demand for pre-registration nursing courses in 2003. There has been a 34 per cent increase in students listing nursing as their first preference since 2001.

The Beattie Government recognises that the highly skilled nature of nursing in the 21st century requires ongoing professional development to ensure our nurses remain at the cutting edge of their profession. We have supported this with a range of initiatives including:

- rural undergraduate nursing scholarships
- skills development programs for isolated nurses using CD ROM technology
- sponsored rural and metropolitan exchanges
- transition programs including emergency nursing and intensive care
- annual nursing scholarship scheme for post graduate study
- mental health nursing scholarships.

We know our nurses are among the most valuable people in our health system. These initiatives and many others have made a significant contribution to expanding and skilling the nursing workforce.

The challenge is maintaining these results in the face of national and international nurse shortages. We recognise that we must continue our successful strategies and continue to develop innovative strategies.

The Beattie Government will continue with recruitment and retention strategies that are proven successes. As well, we will develop innovative ways to enhance nursing as a career, and give nurses more career choices.