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Mr N Laurie
Clerk of the Parliament
Queensland Parliamentary Service
Parliament House
George Street
BRISBANE Q 4000

Dear Mr Laurie

Thank you for your letter dated 16 May 2003, enclosing a petition regarding the allocation of locum doctors to assist as private general practitioners in the Tara Shire.

I am advised that Queensland Health officers are assisting Dr Issa to attract private medical practitioners to join the private practice component of his medical practice. As well, Queensland Health has purchased the building at 33 Day Street, Tara for the medical superintendent with right of private practice to accommodate his private surgery and options have been offered for locum relief.

It is also pleasing that the Tara Shire Council and community are also providing support to assist in recruiting extra medical practitioners to Tara shire. The Council's assistance in purchasing minor medical equipment for the private surgery and possibly providing suitable housing for a second private general practitioner for the community is also commendable. Through the local council and community working with the Northern Downs Health Service District and Dr Issa, there is the best chance to ensure medical services to the Tara shire are sustainable.

Australia is facing a shortage of doctors and for some time now I have been lobbying the Federal Government, who is responsible for matters to do with private general practitioner services, to take action. The State Labor Government has called on the Federal Government to train more of our own doctors in Australia, and we are actively pursuing the establishment of a new Medical School on the Gold Coast.

If you require further advice regarding Tara health services, please do not hesitate to contact Mrs Linda Mulligan, Acting District Manager, Northern Downs Health Service District on telephone (07) 4662 8843.

Thank you for bringing this matter to my attention and I trust this information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely

SIGNED

Wendy Edmond MP
Minister for Health and
Minister Assisting the Premier for Women's Policy