



Hon Steven Miles MP
Minister for Health and
Minister for Ambulance Services

1 4 NOV 2018

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Mr Neil Laurie
Clerk of the Parliament
Queensland Parliamentary Service
George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000


Dear Mr Laurie

I write in response to your letter regarding petition number 3022-18, tabled in Parliament on 16 October 2018, in relation to the obstetrics practice co-location agreement between Gladstone Hospital and the Gladstone Mater Hospital.

The decision by Mercy Health and Aged Care Central Queensland to cease private birthing services at the Gladstone Mater Hospital is very disappointing and I share the concerns of Gladstone residents about the impact this decision will have on the birthing choices available to women in their community. Since the announcement of this decision the Central Queensland Hospital and Health Service has been working in partnership with the Gladstone Mater Hospital to develop options to support the women of Gladstone to continue to have a choice of obstetric services.

Central Queensland Hospital and Health Services aims to deliver great care and experiences for Central Queenslanders and is working hard to develop local networks to deliver patient-centred, safe and sustainable health services to meet the needs of local communities. Since the cessation of the private obstetric service at the Gladstone Mater Hospital on 1 October 2018, Gladstone Hospital has commenced two General Practitioners on contracts to support women who wish to birth privately.

In addition to this, Queensland Health has invested more than \$1 million in additional funding for more midwives and nurses at Gladstone Hospital to support the anticipated increase in birthing numbers. This will also allow Gladstone Hospital to open the neonatal nursery 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. This will support mothers and babies who have needed to travel away from Gladstone to birth at a higher-level facility to return home earlier. It is expected that current recruitment efforts will lead to this service being fully available in January 2019.

Health stakeholders in Gladstone have good, collaborative relationships through the Here 4 Health Committee that meets quarterly to discuss health strategy and issues. This committee is sponsored by Rio Tinto and has membership from primary care, General Practitioners, public and private services as well as local, state and federal politicians.

I trust this information is of assistance to the petitioners.

Yours sincerely



STEVEN MILES MP

Minister for Health

Minister for Ambulance Services