



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

8 OCT 2019

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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 3190-19, tabled in Parliament on 5 September 2019 in relation to a paediatric doctor for South Burnett.

Thank you to the South Burnett community for raising this important issue. The health and wellbeing of children in the South Burnett is of vital importance.

The concerns regarding paediatric services in the South Burnett have been investigated by the Darling Downs Hospital and Health Service (DDHHS). I am advised that the Kingaroy Hospital Paediatric Service is operational and accepting new referrals.

A private paediatrician, Dr Alan Dugdale, who was not employed by the DDHHS, sadly passed away in mid 2018. Two other paediatricians, one private and one public, continue to provide services as usual in the South Burnett region.

I understand that until mid 2018 Dr Dugdale provided paediatric services to the communities of Cherbourg and Murgon in a private capacity. The DDHHS provided Dr Dugdale with rooms and administration support to facilitate these paediatric services.

The DDHHS has partnered with Children's Health Queensland to provide outreach services to the communities of Cherbourg and Murgon twice monthly as previously provided by Dr Dugdale. Dr Vanil Varghese has recently been appointed and will recommence the service from 21 October 2019. Both health services are providing funding for this position as part of the partnership.

Dr Paul Tembo, a public Paediatrician, provides a paediatric outreach service from Toowoomba Hospital to Kingaroy on a weekly basis. Paediatric outreach services are supported by Kingaroy Hospital Senior Medical Officers to ensure all pre and post appointment requirements and evaluations are completed.

Dr Ross Diplock continues to provide a private bulk-billed paediatric service to the community of Nanango twice a month.

I am advised that the Kingaroy Hospital Paediatric Service is meeting the targets for reviewing children within recommended waiting times. Category one (urgent) referrals are seen within one

month, category two referrals within three months and category three (non-urgent) referrals are seen within 12 months.

The recommencement of services to Cherbourg and Murgon with the arrival of Dr Varghese is expected to alleviate pressure on the Kingaroy paediatric clinics.

I trust this information is of assistance to the petitioners.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S Miles', with a stylized flourish at the end.

STEVEN MILES MP

Minister for Health

Minister for Ambulance Services