



Hon Yvette D'Ath MP
Minister for Health and Ambulance Services
Leader of the House

1 William Street Brisbane Qld 4000
GPO Box 48 Brisbane
Queensland 4001 Australia
Telephone +61 7 3035 6100

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

Dear Mr Laurie

I write in response to your letter regarding petition number 3627-21, tabled in Parliament on 2 December 2021, in relation to reinstating the previous patient referral system.

In 2016, to assist with the navigation of outpatient services across the Cairns and Hinterland region, the Cairns and Hinterland Hospital and Health Service (CHHHS), after consulting with primary health services, established a Central Referral Unit at the Cairns Hospital. The referral process was also streamlined so that referring doctors could submit patient referrals to the right place, the first time.

In December 2020, the Smart Referrals system was implemented. This statewide digital referral system forms part of the Government's *Specialist Outpatient Strategy* and supports clinical and business change through the streamlined creation and management of referrals to Queensland specialist outpatient services. Smart Referrals allows those involved in patient care to better manage the patient journey, improve patient safety and reduce specialist outpatient wait times.

The CHHHS was the eleventh Hospital and Health Service to implement the statewide digital referral system. The system enables faster, streamlined management of referrals to and within Queensland public hospitals.

Smart Referrals comprises the following key components:

- General Practitioner (GP) Smart Referrals - seamless and integrated capability allowing GPs to create and submit electronic referrals from existing practice software.
- Referrals Service Directory - details of public specialist services and the necessary clinical business requirements to support referral lodgement.
- Referral Lodgement and Tracking - technical capability to facilitate digital lodgement and tracking referrals across the state.
- Smart Referrals Workflow - digital capability to facilitate the seamless receipt, registration and triage of specialist outpatient referrals.

From March to November 2021, 100% per cent of all referrals received by the CHHHS's Central Referral Intake unit were registered in the Smart Referrals system, with 88% per cent of these being registered within one business day of receipt.

I trust this information is of assistance to the petitioners.

Yours sincerely



YVETTE D'ATH MP
Minister for Health and Ambulance Services
Leader of the House