MI132425
MO: H/05/02306

Mr Neil Laurie
The Clerk of the Parliament
Parliament House
Cnr Alice and George Streets
BRISBANE   QLD   4000

Dear Mr Laurie

Thank you for your letter dated 6 October 2005 enclosing a petition regarding funding for the Gladstone Hospital.

I have reviewed previous correspondence from 2003 and provide the following update.

The Gladstone Hospital's financial allocation continues to be reviewed each year in relation to the services provided. The Gladstone Health Service received growth monies of $150,000 in the 2004/2005 financial year and a further $170,000 this financial year. It was announced in the recent mini budget that an extra $210,000 has also been allocated.

Overall, nursing staff levels, calculated on the Business Planning Framework and supported by the Queensland Nurses Union, continue to be sufficient to provide high quality care for the present activity levels at the Gladstone Hospital however there are some times when a shortage of midwives becomes a problem. Like the midwives, difficulties continue to be experienced in maintaining a full medical staff due to the general shortage throughout the country. This is also relevant to the Physician position that remains vacant. It was with great excitement though that in July a fulltime Paediatrician commenced work at the Hospital.

From the amalgamation of units several years ago nursing staff's ability to provide integrated care in a holistic manner has increased. Staff have also been given the opportunity for their skills to further develop by being provided with a greater variety of work experiences. With the use of routine infection control measures there remains no recorded case of cross infection.

The bed management policy remains in place in that when the demand indicates for the opening of extra bed spaces, this is acted upon. Any decision not to admit a patient is made on the medical need for admission, and not availability of beds.

I trust this information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely

STEPHEN ROBERTSON MP