



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

CONSTITUENCY STATEMENTS

Mersey Community Hospital

SPEECH

Monday, 23 May 2011

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Questioner
Speaker Mr SIDEBOTTOM

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(Braddon) (NaN.NaN pm)

Mr SIDEBOTTOM (Braddon) (10:58): I would like to thank all those committed staff members and members in the state government, particularly in the state health department and the Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing, for the terrific work that they have managed to bring about in the Mersey Community Hospital. It was, of course, the centre of some political storm and controversy 3½ years ago. The Mersey Community Hospital is doing a great job and continuing to provide really good services to the region. In particular, I would like to emphasise that over the past two years the Mersey has grown its endoscopy service and indeed has become the regional hub for endoscopy procedures in the north-west. Since 2008, for example, the North West Area Health Service has increased the number of endoscopies per year by 114 per cent, which is a massive and impressive increase.

The Mersey Community Hospital theatre throughput has increased dramatically, by 48 per cent. For example, in 2007 the Mersey was doing around 250 theatre procedures a year and in February this year the Mersey performed 475 procedures, which is almost double—a staggering increase. The Mersey has taken great steps towards becoming a centre of excellence for short-stay surgery in Tasmania.

New services that have come to the Mersey include a urology service. Patients used to go to Launceston for their consultation and surgery. Now the Mersey has a dedicated regional urology service, providing much improved access for the north-west community.

In recent times the Mersey has also become the dedicated hub for public cataract surgery in the north-west. It has also massively increased its outpatient activities, including, as I mentioned, endoscopy, dental, vascular and plastics. It has also increased its cardiac services.

The Mersey also has a new high-dependency unit, which has been built through the auspices of the Tasmanian government working in partnership with the Commonwealth government. In addition, it is improving and redeveloping its emergency department to the tune of a \$5.3 million redevelopment. It has a refurbished women's and children's ward. And just

recently I had the privilege of opening the University of Tasmania centre of excellence, for the development of a rural health education hub at the Mersey.

I congratulate everyone involved on providing these excellent services. I know we will continue our support to make this happen into the future. *(Time expired)*

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Hon. Peter Slipper): In accordance with standing order 193, the time for members' constituency statements has concluded.

(Fisher) (NaN.NaN pm)