



## MEDIA RELEASE

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### Minister looks at dialysis options for Ingham

HEALTH Minister Stephen Miles has revealed Queensland Health is considering options for renal dialysis services at Ingham Hospital, following enquiries made by Hinchinbrook MP Nick Dametto.

Responding to a Question on Notice from Mr Dametto in August about plans for dialysis treatment in Hinchinbrook, Dr Miles confirmed that Townsville Hospital and Health Service was undertaking a “Rural Master Planning project”, part of which “aims to achieve improved flow for the emergency department and will also consider options for renal services” at Ingham Hospital.

The planning project is due to be completed later this year.

Mr Dametto said Dr Miles’ response was encouraging.

“I welcome this rural planning project and look forward to seeing what the outcome is,” he said.

“For too long, Hinchinbrook residents have been treated like second class citizens when it comes to dialysis services, having been forced to make a 250km round trip to receive treatment in Townsville three times a week. This has been a longstanding issue for residents for several years.”

In his question, Mr Dametto also asked whether the number of patients who qualified for satellite dialysis had grown in recent times to which Dr Miles advised that out of the six Ingham residents who travelled to Townsville Hospital for dialysis, four qualified for satellite dialysis. He added that the number of patients who now qualified for satellite dialysis had grown from two to four over the past 12 months.

But in a letter later sent to Mr Dametto, Dr Miles said there were five Ingham residents who travelled to Townsville Hospital for dialysis and three of those qualified for satellite dialysis. Another four Ingham residents were able to do home dialysis.

Mr Dametto said whichever was the correct figure in relation to those patients who travelled for dialysis, Queensland Health was not taking into account those Ingham residents who received dialysis treatment at Townsville’s Mater Private Hospital.

“I don’t think those figures paint the full picture and it’s obvious the number of people needing dialysis is only going to grow,” he said.

“If you combine those Ingham residents who travel for dialysis with those who do home dialysis, there’s seven or eight people already who would benefit from having a satellite dialysis unit locally.

“This is an opportunity for the State Government and Queensland Health to take proactive steps now to install a satellite dialysis unit here at Ingham Hospital. The Minister confirmed in his letter that the hospital was originally designed with a single renal chair space but it was never commissioned. That space is now

**M E D I A   R E L E A S E**



used as a waiting area for the emergency department and there would need to be additional development undertaken to accommodate a dialysis service. I would hope that goes ahead."

The government has also established a Collaborative to implement their "Advancing Kidney Care 2026 Plan", which aims "to provide more support and greater access to services for Queenslanders with, or at risk of developing, kidney disease".

According to Dr Miles, analysis undertaken by the Health Department estimated it was likely that four patients may have moved to Townsville from Ingham to continue renal dialysis care over the last 10 years.

"We will continue to see this patient shift to Townsville if Ingham Hospital cannot get a satellite dialysis service," Mr Dametto said.

"I will continue to fight hard for this health vital service for our town."

—ENDS—

**Media Enquiries**

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