



BEATTIE GOVERNMENT INJECTS \$6.4 BILLION INTO HEALTH

The Beattie Government today unveiled the centrepiece of its first ever mini Budget – almost \$6.4 Billion in just over five years to help build the best public health system in Australia.

Premier and Treasurer, Peter Beattie, said the money would grow to an extra \$1.5 Billion a year every year.

He said the Health Action Plan provided a ground breaking blueprint for reform, better patient care and a healthier Queensland.

“No State or Territory Government in the history of Australia has made such a massive commitment to ensuring the health and well being of its residents,” he said.

“This money will be pumped directly into our health system to provide more doctors, more nurses, and more allied health staff.

“It will be used to cut waiting lists, maintain and improve our hospitals and buy new technology and equipment that will help save lives.”

Mr Beattie said the record funding package included:

- \$463.7 Million for cancer services;
- \$280.3 Million for Emergency Departments;
- \$259.7 Million for elective surgery;
- \$229.8 Million for Intensive care units;
- \$210.9 Million for cardiac services;
- \$201 Million for mental health services; and
- \$127 Million for workforce training.

“It also includes an extra \$733 Million for pay increases recently negotiated with Queensland doctors as well as existing provisions for future enterprise bargaining negotiations with nurses and other clinical staff,” he said.

“It will also help recruit around 1,200 additional staff to the public health system during the next 18 months including 300 doctors, 500 nurses and 400 allied health professionals, such as physiotherapists, occupational therapists and speech pathologists.”

Mr Beattie said not all of the money had been allocated yet.

He said a comprehensive Statewide Health Services Plan would be developed next year to target the remaining funds at the areas of greatest need.

“We have funded areas where thorough planning has already occurred, but we are not just going to throw money at our problems,” he said.

“Some can be tackled immediately while others require long term solutions through informed, careful planning.

“That is why we have set aside unallocated funds worth \$50.6 Million in 2006-07 growing to \$500.4 Million in 2010-11.”

Mr Beattie said the \$6.36 Billion action plan had already rolled out with an immediate response of \$547.6 Million in 2005-06 which would beef up Queensland Health’s current annual budget to \$5.75 Billion.

“Our population grows by more than 200 people a day and while this growth brings many economic benefits it also puts enormous pressure on services and infrastructure in our State,” he said.

“Through strong economic management our Government has increased funding to record levels yet there is still more to be done particularly in the vital area of health.

“The funding package I have outlined today will help address this challenge with the health budget increasing to \$6.22 Billion in 2006-07, \$6.58 Billion in 2007-08 and \$6.84 Billion in 2008-09.”

Mr Beattie said by 2008-09 his government would have increased the health budget in nominal terms by a staggering 109% in the ten years since 1998-99.

“Our Government has injected billions of dollars into improving the lives of Queenslanders who need it most – people such as the sick, the elderly, disabled, under privileged and homeless,” he said.

“Today we build on that legacy and our strong Labor values.

“We are committed to getting the basics right and building a better health system for Queenslanders.”

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