



Hon Geoff Wilson
Member for Ferny Grove



21 DEC 2011

Minister for Health

Mr Neil Laurie
Clerk of the Parliament
Queensland Parliamentary Service
George St
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Mr Laurie

I write in response to your letter regarding petition no. 1822-11, tabled in Parliament on 29 November 2011, concerning a request for the continuation of services and funding for the Caloundra Hospital.

Please be assured the Queensland Government is committed to expanding health services on the Sunshine Coast.

Caloundra is not losing an emergency department, it is gaining a world class, \$2.03 billion hospital which will include a state-of-the-art emergency department.

The new Sunshine Coast University Hospital (SCUH) is being built in the boundaries of the former Caloundra City Council. The SCUH site was selected knowing the population growth of the Sunshine Coast would be at the southern end of the coastal strip.

The decision to transfer the emergency department from Caloundra to SCUH is based on sound health planning principles and is supported by the emergency department specialists. It is simply not possible to staff and operate two emergency departments located so close to each other with one being a small hospital and the other a major tertiary facility.

To ensure emergency department needs are met both now and into the future, the Caloundra Hospital emergency department is currently undergoing expansion. Construction has already commenced and will be completed next year. This expansion will deliver 10 additional treatment spaces including a fast-track area with treatment spaces for five patients. The fast track area will ensure patients not requiring admission to hospital are seen rapidly in a dedicated area of the emergency department. A new pathology testing facility will also be included.

The Caloundra Hospital emergency department expansion is part of an overall major expansion of the Sunshine Coast Health Service District in preparation for the SCUH.

The construction of the private hospital, collocated on the SCUH hospital site, is also well underway and will provide up to 110 extra beds for public patients from late 2013 through to the opening of the SCUH in late 2016. Queensland Health will purchase 70 public beds from the facility when it opens in 2013 increasing to 110 beds the following year. This will provide more public beds earlier than originally anticipated.

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Following the opening of the SCUH, Nambour Hospital will continue to be a major hospital and will be the Nambour campus of the SCUH. The current Caloundra Hospital will also remain an integral part of the District's network providing a range of services including Renal, Palliative Care and Oral Health.

When the SCUH opens, it will be the location of all the highest specialty services within the District. It will provide many services that residents of the Sunshine Coast currently have to access in Brisbane. As I noted above, Caloundra is not losing a hospital it is gaining a major tertiary, teaching hospital.

I trust this information is of assistance to the petitioners.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Geoff Wilson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Geoff" being more prominent than the last name "Wilson".

GEOFF WILSON MP
Minister for Health