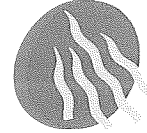




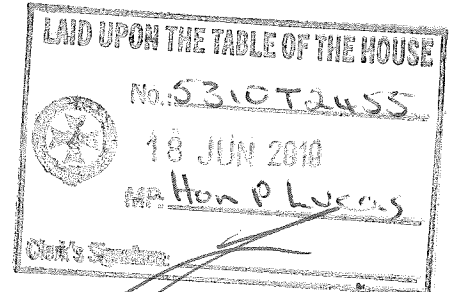
Hon Paul Lucas MP



Queensland
Government

Deputy Premier
Minister for Health

MI170015
MO: 10002123



16 JUN 2010

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

Dear Mr Laurie

I write in response to your letter dated 21 May 2010, regarding Petition No 1451-10, received by the Queensland Legislative Assembly on 20 May 2010. The Petition requests the reinstatement of renal services at Maryborough Hospital.

Feedback from members of the community is always welcomed as it provides the opportunity to review our health services with the aim of improving service delivery. Thank you for bringing your community's concerns to my attention.

Ms Beth Norton, Manager Northern Cluster, Sunshine Coast-Wide Bay Health Service District, has advised that the provision of renal services has been identified as a priority within the Fraser Coast Health Service Services Plan.

The Fraser Coast Health Service provides health services through the Hervey Bay and Maryborough Hospitals. The range of services provided to the Fraser Coast community are shared between these two hospitals to ensure the provision of safe, quality and sustainable services to maximise efficiencies. Renal services are operating out of the Hervey Bay Hospital as part of this model.

In March of this year I visited both the Maryborough and Hervey Bay Hospitals. In meeting with staff and members of the community, there appeared to be an overwhelming acceptance of the fact that the community needs these hospitals to work well together in a complementary fashion. The Harvey Bay and Maryborough Hospitals should not be identical clones of each other.

I am advised that the immediate high demand for renal services on the Fraser Coast has required some patients to travel to locations where renal dialysis capacity exists. To support patients who are required to travel to locations outside of the Fraser Coast, the District has offered return transportation at no cost to the patients.

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While the current situation is regrettable, staff are working hard to ensure that the provision of renal services meet current and projected demands within the region.

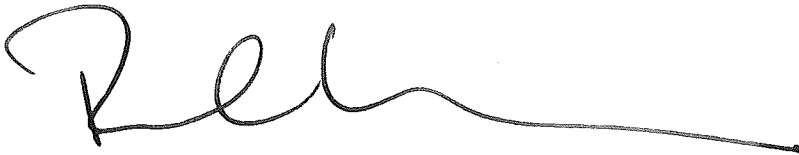
To this end, renal experts from Brisbane and Nambour have been engaged to work with the Health Service staff to develop short and longer term plans for sustainable renal services to meet the growing demand and ensure a comprehensive service is provided across the Northern Cluster, Sunshine Coast-Wide Bay Health Service District.

South Australian renal expert, Associate Professor Kym Bannister, is leading a team who have been requested to undertake a thorough review of renal services provided on the Fraser Coast and at Bundaberg.

Please be assured that Queensland Health is acutely aware of the demand for renal dialysis services within the Fraser Coast region and remain committed to the planning and provision of a sustainable renal service.

Should you have any queries regarding my advice to you, Ms Ann Scheffe, Director of Nursing and Midwifery Services, Northern Cluster, Sunshine Coast-Wide Bay Health Service District, will be pleased to assist you and can be contacted on telephone 4120 6988.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Paul Lucas', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

PAUL LUCAS MP
Deputy Premier
Minister for Health