



The Honourable Tim Nicholls MP  
Minister for Health and Ambulance Services

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Mr Neil Laurie  
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Dear Mr Laurie *Neil,*

I write in response to petition numbers 4356-25 and 4448-26, tabled in Parliament on 4 March 2026, in relation to Clermont Hospital management issues.

I acknowledge the concerns raised in the petition, and the Clermont community's uncertainty with the availability of ongoing primary healthcare services.

#### Closure of General Medical Practices in Clermont

I recognise the vital role general practitioners play in communities across the state. Primary health care, including general practice, is the responsibility of the Commonwealth Government. In many rural and remote areas of Queensland, the Queensland Government has had to step in to support GP services where the Commonwealth Government has failed to do its job, including in Clermont.

The Queensland Government, through the Mackay Hospital Health Service (HHS), is responsible for providing public acute health services to the Clermont community and ensuring those services remain free, safe and accessible.

For many years, the Clermont Multipurpose Health Service has employed medical practitioners under various medical models, which enable practitioners to be Queensland Health employees providing hospital services, while also having the opportunity to operate their own independent general practice.

While the Mackay HHS is not responsible for operating these general practices, as part of its ongoing commitment to the Clermont community, Mackay HHS has provided sustained support to local general practitioners through financial investment, access to facilities and resources, as well as the provision of locum medical staff during periods of workforce shortage or leave.

The closure of general practice clinics in Clermont cannot be attributed to the Mackay HHS. I am advised that decisions to reduce the operating hours, locations of the clinic or to close these practices altogether, have all been made independently by their individual operators.

#### Recruitment for Clermont Multipurpose Health Service

The Mackay HHS remains committed to securing permanent medical coverage for the Clermont Multipurpose Health Service. Despite sustained recruitment efforts, the ability to attract and appoint suitable qualified medical practitioners, who possess the necessary experience and credentialing to work fractionally across both the health service and local general practice, continues to present a significant challenge.

The Mackay HHS are continuing with active recruitment for medical staff at Clermont Multipurpose Health Service and service continuity is being maintained through the utilisation of locum doctors and support from the Retrieval Services Queensland Telehealth when no onsite medical cover is available.

The Clermont Hospital is continuing to provide 24/7 emergency care and public acute health services. Every person who presents to the hospital is assessed and treated as required.

#### Locally Governed Primary Healthcare Model

While primary health care is the responsibility of the Commonwealth Government, I understand the Mackay HHS is continuing to work closely with the North Queensland Primary Health Network, and has engaged with local community organisations to explore suitable options to support a sustainable general practice model for the Clermont community.

Thank you for raising this matter with me and I trust this information is of assistance to the petitioners.

Yours sincerely



**Tim Nicholls MP**  
Minister for Health and Ambulance Services  
Member for Clayfield