



The Honourable Tim Nicholls MP  
Minister for Health and Ambulance Services

Queensland Legislative Assembly  
Number: SB25T302  
03 APR 2025  
Tabled   
By Leave   
Clerk's Signature: Hon Speaker

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19 February 2025

Hon Pat Weir MP  
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly  
Parliament House

Dear Mr Speaker

*Pat,*

I refer to comments made by Mr Steven Miles MP, the Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Assembly on 18 February 2025. During the period allotted for Matters of Public Interest, the Leader of the Opposition stated that the Crisafulli Government was “scrapping perinatal mental health beds for Queensland mums”<sup>1</sup>.

I submit that in making this statement, the Leader of the Opposition deliberately misled the House and has therefore committed a contempt of Parliament, in breach of Standing Order 266(2).

As you are aware, there are three elements to be proven to establish that a Member has committed the contempt of deliberately misleading the House:

1. The statement must have been misleading;
2. The Member making the statement must have known, at the time the statement was made, that it was incorrect; and
3. In making the statement, the Member intended to mislead the House.

I submit that the Leader of the Opposition had evidence contrary to his allegations that the Crisafulli Government was “scrapping perinatal mental health beds for Queensland mums” and deliberately chose to mislead the House. My evidence to support this claim is outlined below.

*The statement must have been misleading*

The Leader of the Opposition stated that the Crisafulli Government was “scrapping perinatal mental health beds for Queensland mums”<sup>2</sup>. Four days prior to the Leader of the Opposition making this comment, on 14 February 2025, the Crisafulli Government released a media statement (attached) that confirmed:

*The Crisafulli Government will deliver 30 perinatal mental health beds, including 8 in Townsville, as part of a boost to perinatal mental health services across the State.*

As the existing and planned perinatal mental health beds has clearly not reduced, the Leader of the Opposition’s allegation is factually incorrect.

<sup>1</sup> Queensland, *Parliamentary Debates*, Legislative Assembly, 18 February 2025 (Steven Miles, Leader of the Opposition).

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

*The Member making the statement must have known, at the time the statement was made, that it was incorrect*

As stated above, evidence of the Crisafulli Government's commitment to deliver the 30 perinatal mental health beds, including 8 in Townsville had been published on the ministerial media statements website four days prior to when the Leader of the Opposition rose to speak in Parliament.

It's reasonable to assume the Leader of the Opposition and his staff read ministerial media statements, as this is the official channel through which the Government makes announcements. The Member leads one of the best resourced oppositions in the country with over 20 staff. The Member is adequately resourced to ensure that planned speeches in the House are factually correct.

*In making the statement, the Member intended to mislead the House*

Upon review of the archived broadcast, it can be seen that the Leader of the Opposition is reading from a prewritten speech, which proves that Mr Miles intended to assert a claim against the Crisafulli Government that had already been established as factually incorrect.

*Conclusion*

This evidence clearly outlines that the Leader of the Opposition has failed to uphold the standard expected of Members of Parliament and has deliberately misled the Parliament through his statement made on 18 February 2025.

Due to the critical and sensitive role of mental health services for new mums, I believe that an apology and a referral to the Ethics Committee is justified.

Should you require any further information or any clarification of matters, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tim Nicholls". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

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

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## MEDIA STATEMENT: Crisafulli Government to deliver 30 perinatal mental health care beds

Published Friday, 14 February, 2025 at 08:48 AM

**Minister for Health and Ambulance Services**

The Honourable Tim Nicholls

### Crisafulli Government to deliver 30 perinatal mental health care beds

- **The Crisafulli Government will deliver 30 perinatal mental health beds, including 8 in Townsville, as part of a boost to perinatal mental health services across the State.**
- **The Crisafulli Government will now undertake a competitive market approach to deliver all 30 beds sooner, with the best value for Queenslanders.**
- **It follows former health minister announcing a new eight-bed mother-and-baby perinatal mental health unit in Townsville without a competitive tender process and without allocating adequate funding.**

The Crisafulli Government will deliver more specialist perinatal inpatient treatment beds and additional community supports for new mothers and their families.

An eight-bed perinatal mental health unit in Townsville will be the first project of several to go through proper procurement processes to deliver the best value for Queenslanders, after the former Labor government ignored protocol and announced a direct agreement with Mater Private Hospital Townsville for the facility.

Townsville is one of six locations across the State the former government announced, on 10 May 2024, would receive an eight-bed perinatal mental health unit as part of a \$39 million commitment for 30 new beds.

The former Government was advised at the time of announcement that this level of funding was inadequate to support the delivery and infrastructure required for these beds state-wide and was warned of reputational and commercial risks of proceeding due to potential competitors not having had the opportunity to provide alternative proposals.

The direct procurement process for the Townsville beds was estimated to cost \$38 million alone, and the remainder of the beds would never have been delivered by Labor as promised.

In contrast, the Crisafulli Government will deliver all 30 beds sooner, and for the best value for money, by putting all projects through proper rigorous procurement processes.

Queensland Health will continue to engage with Townsville Hospital and Health Service, Mater and other potential providers on the capacity to establish perinatal mental health beds in Townsville.

Minister for Health and Ambulance Services Tim Nicholls said the Crisafulli Government would deliver 30 additional perinatal mental health beds for Queenslanders.

"The Crisafulli Government is committed to easier access to health services for all Queenslanders and this includes delivering 30 perinatal mental health beds," Minister Nicholls said.

"The facts are the former government awarded a project without procurement processes and without the budget to do the work.

"We are now going back to procurement for these beds and will deliver them for the best value for Queenslanders, when Labor never would have."

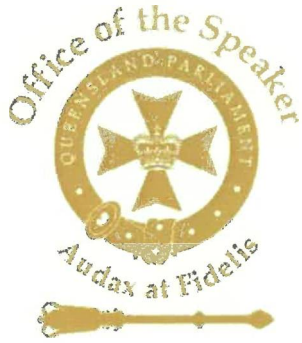
Minister Nicholls said this example of failing to properly fund projects was just the latest in a long line of un-funded and underfunded health services and infrastructure.

"To date, we have uncovered more than \$18 billion in Labor health blowouts including a \$6 billion blowout on the hospital infrastructure program to the \$12 billion funding black hole for services, and now inadequate funding for perinatal mental health beds," he said.

"The Crisafulli Government will fix Labor's mess and deliver world-class health services for Queenslanders, including perinatal mental health services."

**ENDS**

**MEDIA CONTACT:** David McLachlan 0428 716 171



Your Ref:

Our Ref: 250220-OUT-LOTO

20 February 2025

Mr Steven Miles MP  
Leader of the Opposition  
L9, 63 George Street  
Brisbane QLD 4000

By E-mail: [TheLeader@opposition.qld.gov.au](mailto:TheLeader@opposition.qld.gov.au)

Dear Leader

The Office of the Speaker received correspondence on 19 February 2025 from the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services. The said matter concerns whether you have deliberately misled the House. A copy of this correspondence is attached.

Deliberately misleading the House is listed as an example of behaviour that the House may treat as a contempt (see *Standing Order 266 (2)*).

*Standing Order 269 (5)* provides that in considering whether such a matter should be referred to the Ethics Committee, the Speaker may request further information from the person the subject of the allegation. Accordingly, I am writing to you pursuant to that Standing Order.

*Standing Order 269 (4)* provides that in considering whether the matter should be referred to the Ethics Committee, the Speaker shall take account of the degree of importance of the matter which has been raised and whether an adequate apology or explanation has been made in respect of the matter.

I wish to stress that I have not yet formed a view as to whether this particular allegation should be referred to the Ethics Committee. However, as a matter of course, I remind all members who are the subject of such allegations of the long-established convention that should a Member become aware they have inadvertently misled the House, they should, at the earliest opportunity, correct the record and apologise for their inadvertence.

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George St Brisbane Queensland 4000 Australia

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Should you wish to provide me with further information to assist me in making a determination as to whether the matter should be referred to the Ethics Committee under *Standing Order 269* please provide your response by COB 6 March 2025.

In the meantime, should your office have any queries relating to this matter, they may be directed to my Executive Officer, Coral-Leah Kemp, by email to [Speaker@parliament.qld.gov.au](mailto:Speaker@parliament.qld.gov.au) or on 07 3553 6700.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Pat Weir', with a stylized flourish at the end.

**HON PAT WEIR MP**  
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly

Enc.



**THE HON STEVEN MILES MP**  
Leader of the Opposition

PO Box 15057 City East  
Queensland 4002 Australia  
Telephone 3004 2300  
Email [theleader@opposition.qld.gov.au](mailto:theleader@opposition.qld.gov.au)

14 March 2025

The Honourable Pat Weir MP  
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly  
Queensland Parliament  
BRISBANE QLD 4000

VIA EMAIL: [speaker@parliament.qld.gov.au](mailto:speaker@parliament.qld.gov.au)

Dear Speaker

I acknowledge your correspondence dated 20 February 2025 regarding an allegation raised by the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services, the Member for Clayfield.

The Member for Clayfield has raised issue with parts of my Matters of Public Interest delivered in the Legislative Assembly of the Queensland Parliament on Tuesday, 18 February 2025, regarding the concerning approach the Crisafulli Liberal National Party (LNP) is taking in governing Queensland.

In the correspondence from the Member for Clayfield he appears to be conflating two issues that being the "*Townsville University Hospital*" and "*scrapping perinatal mental health beds for Queensland mums*". A review of page 43 of the Record of Proceedings clearly shows that I was listing off a wide variety of concerns of the Crisafulli LNP Government, which is denoted by the use of the semi colon between the two statements.

For completeness, the list of items the Queensland Opposition understands the Queensland Government is prioritising include:

- cutting hospital expansions in regional Queensland, starting with the Townsville University Hospital;
- scrapping perinatal mental health beds for Queensland mums;
- blocking health care for vulnerable young Queenslanders;
- sacking transfer nurses from our busy emergency departments;
- juicing up the midyear budget which is costing Queenslanders \$45.2 million in interest payments – the experts at S&P say they are still sorting fact from fiction when it comes to the figures this government has released; and
- most worryingly, backing out of heavy rail to the Sunshine Coast ...

However, if I follow the logic of the Member for Clayfield and address perinatal mental health beds in conjunction with Townsville, it is clear that the Crisafulli LNP Government has scrapped the existing pathway forward announced by the former Labor Government and instead decided to establish a different process. This is articulated in the media statement that the Member for Clayfield refers to in his correspondence.

In a media article, dated 14 February 2025 the Courier Mail (**Attachment A**) reported "*Mater was advised on December 2 that Queensland Health would not proceed with the proposal to build an eight-bed unit at Mater's Townsville hospital campus*", this is in relation to perinatal mental health. This clearly shows that the existing pathway was "*scrapped*" by the LNP Crisafulli Government and replaced by a new pathway, delaying the service.

Previous Speakers have ruled that "*the nature of political debate is that members engage in argument by discussing opposing viewpoints or different opinions ...*" and I submit that this is the case here. The Member for Clayfield is arguing that a service in a different form will be provided and I was arguing in my contribution through my understanding, based on reporting by the Courier Mail, that the Crisafulli LNP Government had scrapped the existing process with Mater.

I also submit that the Member for Clayfield has not provided any evidence that I deliberately misled the Queensland Parliament.

Speaker, I take my role as a Member of the Queensland Parliament seriously and as such, for the dignity and respect of the Legislative Assembly of the Queensland Parliament I advise that for the avoidance of doubt my statement could have stated "*scrapping the existing proposed perinatal mental health beds for Queensland mums*".

I trust the aforementioned information is of assistance to you in your deliberations.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can assist further.

Yours sincerely



**STEVEN MILES MP**  
**LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION**

# Nicholls cuts to save dimes

Taylah Fellows

## Minister defunds program to deliver hospital beds for mums in mental health crisis

The Health Minister has taken a scalpel to the hospital build program the first time, cutting plans to deliver beds that support new mothers with severe mental health issues.

An eight-bed perinatal unit was planned for the Townsville Hospital Campus as part of a \$39m investment under the former Labor government to deliver 30 baby/mother beds across six Queensland hospitals.

Under Labor, all 30 beds were planned to be delivered by late 2026 under a wider \$89m funding program for perinatal mental healthcare.

Tim Nicholls has revealed the Townsville beds will no longer go ahead after the project ballooned to \$38m, excluding operational costs, chewing up nearly the entire \$39m allo-

cation.

He blamed the funding shortage on his Labor predecessor Shannon Fentiman.

However, a spokesman for Mater confirmed the hospital has been informed the unit would not be built back in December.

"Mater was advised on December 2 that Queensland Health would not proceed with the proposal to build an eight-bed unit at Mater's Townsville hospital campus," he said.

"Mater understands the state government now intends to conduct a tender process for the service."

Mr Nicholls has further alleged that Ms Fentiman ignored department advice to conduct market analysis and

issue a competitive market tender before making the funding announcement.

"This is another example of Shannon Fentiman's sugar hit announcements without the money or the plan to follow through and deliver outcomes for Queenslanders," he said.

In a media statement dated May 10, Ms Fentiman announced the \$39m was an "initial" investment for the 30 beds as part of Labor's five-year \$1.6bn mental health plan.

It is understood Ms Fentiman signed off on 12 perinatal mental health beds across Cairns, Logan and Ipswich prior to the October state election. Funding was to be spent on planning, design and consultation, with beds to be partly

paid for through revenue from the mental health levy.

Mr Nicholls insists the government will still deliver all 30 beds however, the timeline for delivery will likely be affected by the tender process.

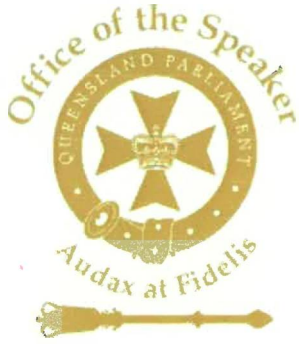
"The Crisafulli Government will fix Labor's mess, end the cost blowouts, and deliver world-class health services for Queenslanders, including perinatal mental health services," he said.

"To be clear, the Crisafulli Government will deliver this service."

There are 12 public perinatal mental health inpatient beds in Queensland located in Brisbane and the Gold Coast.

One in five women experienced mental ill health within 24 months of having children.





Your Ref:

Our Ref: 250331-OUT-LOTO

31 March 2025

Hon Steven Miles MP  
Leader of the Opposition  
L9, 63 George Street  
Brisbane QLD 4000

By E-mail: [TheLeader@opposition.qld.gov.au](mailto:TheLeader@opposition.qld.gov.au)

Dear Leader

I write further to my correspondence of 20 February 2025 regarding allegations by the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services that you deliberately misled the House.

Deliberately misleading the House is listed as an example of behaviour that the House may treat as a contempt (see *Standing Order 266 (2)*).

I note your response of 14 March 2025. I am unconvinced by the reasoning and material provided.

It is my view that the matter is important, and a retraction and apology is required. This retraction and apology should occur in preliminary business during either Matters of Privilege or Personal Explanations during preliminary business, no later than Thursday 3 April 2025.

If a retraction and apology is not proffered, then I will proceed on the basis of there being no adequate apology in accordance with *SO 269(4)*.

In the meantime, should your office have any queries relating to this matter, they may be directed to my Executive Officer, Coral-Leah Kemp, by email to [Speaker@parliament.qld.gov.au](mailto:Speaker@parliament.qld.gov.au) or on 07 3553 6700.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Pat Weir', is written in a cursive style.

**HON PAT WEIR MP**  
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly

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