

Question on Notice

No. 524

Asked on 3 April 2019

MR D LAST asked the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services (HON DR S MILES)—

QUESTION

With reference to the Federal Government's recent commitment to fund a CT Scanner and associated equipment for the Bowen Hospital and the need for a stand-alone Medical Imaging Facility at the hospital—

Will the Minister advise the status of this project and whether funds will be committed to undertaking this work in the upcoming budget?

ANSWER

In a media release

(<http://www.health.gov.au/internet/ministers/publishing.nsf/Content/health-mediarel-yr2019-hunt071.htm>) dated 21 March 2019, the Federal Minister for Health Greg Hunt committed \$5 million for a Computed Tomography (CT) scanner at the Bowen Hospital, and called on the Queensland Government to fund the necessary expansion or refurbishment of the Bowen Hospital.

Budget Paper No. 2 (<https://www.budget.gov.au/2019-20/content/bp2/download/bp2.pdf>) (page 107) of the 2019-20 Federal Budget, released on 2 April 2019, then claimed that the \$5 million would cover “the refurbishment of medical imaging at Bowen Hospital, including a new CT scanner”.

The Mackay Hospital and Health Service has indicated that a new purpose-built room will need to be constructed next to the Emergency Department, which is big enough to hold not only the new CT scanner, but also all of the existing medical imaging services (including plain x-ray, ultrasound and dental Orthopantomogram). The existing medical imaging area would then be refurbished to improve community outpatient services for mental health clients, visiting specialist services and continue to grow telehealth capacity.

The Federal Labor Opposition has committed to fully fund the \$9.6 million required for a CT scanner and a purpose-built room at the Bowen Hospital.

The Federal Coalition Government should explain why it has only committed half the funding required for Bowen Hospital's project, while it has fully funded projects in other States.