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Focus on e-Health, Mental Health, Mums & Bubs in QLD Budget

The Public Health Association of Australia (PHAA) has welcomed the focus on e-Health, mental health and initiatives to support mums and bubs in the QLD Budget. QLD's health budget will grow by 8.2% overall in 2009-10, despite pressures associated with the global financial crisis.

"\$87.1 million will be spent on e-Health Clinical Systems, including a new state-wide radiology information system and digital technology for breast screening. \$48.4 million will be spent on enhancements to mental health services and \$42.7 million will be dedicated over 3 years for maternity and child health care initiatives. These initiatives will make a valuable contribution to improving health service delivery in QLD, particularly in improving equity in service standards for people living in rural and regional areas," said Michael Moore, Chief Executive Officer of the PHAA.

"A further \$86.2 million will be spent on information and communication technology equipment to support the broader e-Health strategy. \$84.5 million will be spent on upgrading health technology equipment. These measures complement the broader e-Health investments and should ultimately contribute to the delivery of better and more comprehensive health care services across the state.

"The additional \$42.7 million for maternity and child health care initiatives will bring extra care closer to pregnant women in rural and regional areas and also offer parenting support to more mothers throughout QLD. Midwifery support will be extended and funding has also been allocated to establish newborn and family drop-in clinics with specialist advice for new parents on issues such as breastfeeding, nutrition and child development. These measures represent a strong investment in the health and wellbeing of families and the next generation.

"The additional spending for enhancements to mental health services is in line with the broader *QLD Plan for Mental Health 2007-2017*, and should underpin genuine improvements in service delivery for people experiencing mental illness and their families.

"While hospital and infrastructure spending comprise the lion's share of the QLD Health Budget, the broader public health measures outlined above pave the way for future enhancements in health service delivery and outcomes across a range of areas," said Mr Moore.

For further information/comment:

Mr Michael Moore, CEO, Public Health Association of Australia (PHAA)

0417 249 731