Brisbane 11 July 2014. Queensland dental patients, including some who have been waiting up to 10 years, have a new a reason to smile, with the Queensland Government completing a statewide blitz on dental waiting lists which has reduced the list to zero.

Health Minister Lawrence Springborg said the waiting list for people getting their teeth fixed under Labor blew out to 10 years.

But in just two years, the LNP Government has ensured that the number of dental patients whose wait exceeds the accepted benchmark time has dropped by 100 per cent, Mr Springborg said.

“The former Labor Government lost control of Queensland Health and public dental patients were among those who suffered most,” he said.

“When the LNP began its campaign to reduce public dental waiting lists, 62,513 Queenslanders were waiting more than two years. That is now zero which is a remarkable achievement.

“Tooth decay is the most common global disease and I’m proud to say that no Queenslander will now wait more than two years for general dental treatment – for the first time since the 1990s.”

Mr Springborg said in the past financial year a total of $229 million was spent on public oral health in Queensland, including $30.4 million in Commonwealth funds as part of a national partnership agreement.

“The Queensland Government delivered this outcome by hiring more dentists, investing in dental facilities and starting a voucher system so that private sector dentists could help deliver public dental care for free to patients,” Mr Springborg said.

“Our strong plan empowered patients themselves by allowing them to choose to use a voucher and have their dental procedures undertaken by their local private dentist.

“We are all about putting the patient first and empowering them to decide what’s best and what’s most convenient for them. This is a model the Can Do government will continue to utilise as we put the patient front and centre in every decision.

“This year the budget for Queensland Health is $2 billion more than when the LNP won government just over two years ago. This new investment is directed at improving frontline healthcare.”

“Partnerships with the private and non-government sectors, such as those with Mater Health

Services, the Red Cross, and the Royal Flying Doctor Service have supported better health care in Queensland for more than 100 years.

"A wider range of these effective partnerships will continue to provide better health care services to Queenslanders over the decades to come."