




Speech By
Dr Christian Rowan

MEMBER FOR MOGGILL

Record of Proceedings, 18 June 2021

MOTION OF CONDOLENCE

Edwards, Hon. Sir LR, AC

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (10.23 am): As the Liberal National Party state member for Moggill and as a former president of the Australian Medical Association of Queensland, it is a privilege to rise and support this motion and honour the life, service and sacrifice of a true servant of the people of Queensland. On 26 May 2021, the Hon. Sir Llewellyn Roy Edwards AC passed away at the age of 85 years. With the passing of Sir Llew, our state has lost not only a Queensland Great but also a true gentleman whose service in so many different and varied capacities has left a legacy which has benefited generations of Queenslanders.

It is a profound loss that has been felt right across Queensland and particularly by all of those who were fortunate enough to know Sir Llew through his significant contributions to our state—be it through his tenure in the Queensland parliament, his roles as deputy premier of Queensland, treasurer and state leader of the Liberal Party, his service to higher education or via his leadership as chair of World Expo 88. However, today in addressing this condolence motion I want to particularly acknowledge and pay tribute to the public service made by Sir Llew Edwards to health care and the medical profession in Queensland.

Born on 2 August 1935 in Ipswich, Sir Llew attended school at Raceview and Silkstone state schools before then attending Ipswich Grammar School. As is well known, following his high school education, Sir Llew entered his family business, R.T. Edwards, as an apprentice electrician. It was a vocation that was not his first choice, as Sir Llew had instead wanted to study medicine, but he began as an electrician given that his family insisted he should not consider progressing to a higher tertiary qualification until first completing a four-year apprenticeship. It can be said that Sir Llew's transition to medicine literally came about by an accident, when in his third year as an apprentice he fell off a ladder and cracked three of his vertebrae. As Sir Llew later recalled, that accident had 'reinforced the notion that I had better get on and do medicine'.

In 1958 Sir Llew commenced his tertiary education at the University of Queensland, graduating with his medical degree in 1965 at the age of 27 with a Bachelor of Medicine and a Bachelor of Surgery. Following his graduation, Sir Llew then commenced his professional service of improving the health and wellbeing of Queenslanders. From 1965 to 1967 Sir Llew served as a resident medical officer at the Ipswich General Hospital and in 1968 he then served as a surgical registrar at the Ipswich General Hospital.

Throughout this time and for more than 10 years following his graduation, Sir Llew also worked as a general practitioner and helped to deliver thousands of new Queenslanders. As fate would have it, Sir Llew's foray into Queensland state politics came via his medical practice when none other than the former leader of the Liberal Party and the 30th premier of Queensland, Sir Gordon Chalk, came to see Sir Llew at his Ipswich medical practice to convince him that he should consider running for state

parliament. As all doctors who serve and have served as elected representatives in this place can attest to, there is certainly a diverse range of political views offered by patients, and I am sure Sir Llew's decision may have surprised many in his then medical practice.

In May 1972 Sir Llew was sworn in as the state member for Ipswich in the Queensland parliament. In doing so, he became the first non-Labor state member representing the city of Ipswich in nearly 50 years. Sir Llew is widely remembered for his contribution and service to the Queensland parliament where, as the minister for health from 1974 to 1978, he helped lay the foundation for ensuring that Queenslanders had access to a modern and accessible health system. This is evident even in Sir Llew's maiden speech, which best encapsulates his core belief in the prosperity of this great state being enjoyed by each and every Queenslanders, as well as the associated importance of ensuring that the health and welfare of each individual is a priority. As Sir Llew said—

... the greatest gift a person can acquire is that of good health and the wherewithal to develop and maintain a healthy body and a healthy mind as well as the ability to enjoy such facilities to the best of one's capabilities in order to give the full meaning to life.

I believe that benefits that can be derived from the prosperity of this State and nation should be enjoyed by all. I therefore wish to pay a great deal of attention and devote a great deal of time to research, study and consideration of all aspects of health and welfare services, to ensure that the best facilities are available to all sections of the community so that the people of this State, of which we are justly proud, may enjoy their lives to the optimum.

Notwithstanding his service to the Queensland parliament, World Expo 88 and also as chancellor of the University of Queensland, Sir Llew was also an eminently qualified individual—a Fellow of the Royal Australasian College of Medical Administrators, a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Management, not to mention having an honorary doctorate from Griffith University as well as an honorary doctorate from the Queensland University of Technology. I am also a Fellow of the Royal Australasian College of Medical Administrators—which is the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency recognised specialist medical college that provides education, training, knowledge and advice in medical management in order for fellows of RACMA to fulfil key roles and positions in various government bureaucracies, public and private hospitals, not-for-profit organisations and other health agencies.

The broader membership of the Royal Australasian College of Medical Administrators is certainly feeling the profound professional loss of a colleague who gave so much to health and medical research. It also speaks volumes about the genuine nature and character of Sir Llew Edwards that, in a profile in 1992 when reflecting on his then 30 years of service to Queensland, Sir Llew chose his time as a general practitioner to remember most fondly in, as he termed it, the noblest profession of all. I know that both the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners and the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine also recognise Sir Llew's immense contribution to primary care and community medicine.

I was fortunate to meet Sir Llew on many occasions, and his mentorship and leadership, along with a generation of conservative medical practitioners—including former senator the late Dr John Herron AO and the late Professor Tess Cramond AO OBE—is something I will always cherish and be forever grateful for.

On 3 June 2021, I along with many elected representatives in this place attended the state funeral service and celebration of the life of Sir Llew Edwards which was held at the cathedral church of St John the Evangelist. The eulogy and tributes on the day were a testament to a life well lived. Modern Queensland would not be what it is today without the dedication and service of Sir Llew Edwards. I wish to place on record my formal condolences to his wife, Lady Jane Edwards, and to his surviving children, Mark and David, as well as the member for Bonney and the entire extended family of the late Sir Llew Edwards. Vale Dr Llew Edwards.