



Speech by

# Miss FIONA SIMPSON

MEMBER FOR MAROOCHYDORE

---

Hansard 21 September 1998

## MARYBOROUGH HOSPITAL

**Miss SIMPSON** (Maroochydore—NPA) (10.20 a.m.): Maryborough people spoke loudly and clearly last month about the Labor Party's broken promises in relation to their hospital. Fifteen hundred angry people crowded the town hall to protest the downgrading of the intensive care unit. This Labor Government was forced to back down. Even after the Beattie Government backflip, more than a thousand people still marched in the streets over the issue, promising to hold this Government to account for any move to take hospital services or facilities away from this regional centre. Their mistrust of this Government was well founded.

The latest broken promise from this Government relates to the paediatric unit at the hospital. Health Minister Wendy Edmond promised the people a stand-alone paediatric unit, a facility which the hospital currently has and which was clearly in the coalition's \$17m redevelopment plan for the hospital. In a letter to a concerned Maryborough mother dated 24 September 1998, Mrs Edmond stated—

"... paediatric services at Maryborough will remain as a stand alone unit with the same number of beds."

However, in an article from the Fraser Coast Chronicle headed "Scepticism over hospital plans", local hospital staff dispute the Minister's claims. I table that article. Local hospital staff state in the article that the Health Minister plans to reduce the Maryborough paediatric unit from 16 beds to eight beds. Eight beds for adults will be located in the same ward. The Labor Party's redevelopment maps and drawings show that this ward is not a stand-alone paediatric unit. This is clearly worrying to parents and staff, particularly in regard to security, with adults being mixed in with the children's ward.

Maryborough parents have raised the need for a stand-alone unit personally with the Premier; however, their pleas have fallen on deaf ears. The Labor Government is still not providing the people of Maryborough with the hospital services they deserve. Other elements of the Labor Government's downgrade include a reduction in bed numbers from the 120 beds announced by the coalition to 94 beds.

Time expired.

---