



Speech by

Miss FIONA SIMPSON

MEMBER FOR MAROOCHYDORE

Hansard 19 November 1998

HOSPITAL WAITING LISTS

Miss SIMPSON (Maroochydore—NPA) (8.51 p.m.): The Beattie Labor Government inherited the best public hospital system in Australia and, in just five months, Health Minister Edmond has undone all of the coalition's good work. Waiting lists in Queensland public hospitals have already blown out to 36,728 people in just three months under Labor. Most concerning is the increase in patients waiting for urgent elective surgery. The waiting list for urgent elective surgery increased by 164 in just three months. The waiting list for semi-urgent elective surgery has also blown out by a massive 712 patients over the past three months.

Mr Borbidge: Despite record funding under the new Medicare deal we negotiated.

Miss SIMPSON: That is despite record funding under the new Medicare Agreement.

That waiting list is growing at more than 200 patients per month under Labor. Claims by Mrs Edmond about a hidden elective surgery waiting list have also proved to be a fraud and nothing more than an excuse for her own gross incompetence. The Health Minister has been forced to admit in this House that her so-called hidden waiting list for elective surgery actually includes patients with diabetes, skin rashes and mental illnesses. In answer to a question on notice, the Health Minister has confirmed that her so-called hidden elective surgery waiting list actually covers more than 80 specialties and subspecialties. Many of the patients are not elective surgery patients at all. That is why the Health Minister has not included any information regarding outpatient waiting lists in her recent quarterly waiting list report. Mrs Edmond has been caught out.

The massive increase in waiting lists under the Beattie Labor Government goes against the dramatic reductions in waiting lists which occurred under the coalition Government. In two years the coalition took Queensland from having the worst waiting lists in Australia under Labor to the best. The Queensland coalition set targets to reduce Category 1 and Category 2 waiting lists in our public hospitals and we reached those targets.
