



Speech by

DESLEY BOYLE

MEMBER FOR CAIRNS

Hansard 20 July 1999

CAIRNS BASE HOSPITAL LONG-SERVING NURSES

Ms BOYLE (Cairns—ALP) (7.26 p.m.): I must say that I endorse the sentiments of the honourable member who has just spoken. Indeed, he raised some important issues for all of us in this House to consider in relation to our own relatives, our constituents and our own futures.

However, tonight I would like to talk about the genuine pleasure that I had recently in attending a ceremony at the Cairns Base Hospital where 66 nurses in total were recognised for their long service to that hospital. In fact, 45 of the nurses present were awarded medals for 15 years or more of service and another 21 were recognised for over 25 years of service at the Cairns Base Hospital.

For their long years of service, they received a badge and a certificate. That is not really much. Of course, it is a symbol of recognition, and it is good to give, but when one thinks of the very many devoted years of energy and commitment that they have spent, it is not much. I would like to recognise in particular the longest serving of the whole group, and that is Sister Cath Greenwood, a nurse educator, who has served for over 37 years at the Cairns Base Hospital. For those of us who know her, we would say that she is a lady of style and good sense, one who has moved forward steadily during a lengthy period of upheavals, advances, system changes, and increasing public demands in health.

Sister Greenwood is a legend at the Cairns Base Hospital. Of course, when we consider the patterns of employment of the modern world, it is unlikely that her length of service will ever be surpassed. What does she receive? She receives recognition from her peers of the tremendous benefits that she has given to the public sector. What is the public sector? It is not us as the Government, really; it is those thousands of patients and their families who, over very many years, have been given the best of care and, along the way, those thousands of nurses who have been given the best of teaching. It is important to recognise the importance of this service to people. In the end, that is what public service is about. At this time when there are continuing demands for ever-increasing levels of service in Health, I hope that Cath Greenwood and all of those other medal awardees, all of those other long-serving staff members of the Cairns Base Hospital, will keep their focus on how very well they have served the region of far-north Queensland over these many years. When they look back on their long careers and remember their successes, may they also remember their very fine contribution to the far north of Queensland.
