



Speech by

Miss FIONA SIMPSON

MEMBER FOR MAROOCHYDORE

Hansard 15 September 1999

HEALTH SYSTEM

Miss SIMPSON (Maroochydore—NPA) (10.24 a.m.): This Labor Government has a blueprint for Health that is ripping the heart and soul out of the hospital system. The only people who think it is a good idea are economic rationalists who believe that sick people are a burden to society and that good administration on health means fewer hospitals. The distress and uncertainty across the Health Department and its staff at this moment is growing daily.

Members opposite should talk to staff at the Royal Brisbane Hospital about the Government's line that services are being provided elsewhere and they will find that their answer is proven. They know what is going on: that acute services are being slashed, that it is purely budgetary driven and that those services have not been relocated to other areas to cope with it. There have been union meetings around the State calling on the Government to come clean about the secret health review, which is at the heart of this distress. I table a memo from the Australian Workers Union. I also table a press release of the State Public Services Federation of Queensland.

It is interesting that one of the AWU demands was for a list of recommendations in the secret health review adopted in June at Cabinet. Honourable members should remember that it was revealed a few weeks ago that the Queensland Health Strategy Advisory Project recommendation went to Cabinet under Premier Beattie's and Minister Edmond's and Minister Hamill's signature.

This is a secret slash and burn report. It recommended privatisation of health care. It recommended capital charging—and what a surprise! That is another one of the recommendations that the Premier had said had only been noted. Remember the Premier said that these had only been noted, then it was rejected, then something had been accepted, and then some of it had been accepted and some had been rejected? But it turned out that his office staff admitted that nothing in this report had been rejected. The Premier did not have the decency to tell the people of Queensland that he had a radical overhaul of services in this State that meant slashing of outpatient services, closing of wards at the Royal Brisbane Hospital in critical areas of service and that the people there simply do not trust him. They know that those services do not exist elsewhere. The capital charging recommended in this report said that he would be looking at downsizing.

Time expired.
