



Speech by

Mr T. MALONE

MEMBER FOR MIRANI

Hansard 25 August 1999

QUEENSLAND AMBULANCE SERVICE

Mr MALONE (Mirani—NPA) (10.25 a.m.): I rise in this House today to alert members to a disgraceful situation which seems to be occurring right around our State on an all too regular basis. I have several relevant cases on file as a result of members of the public contacting me, and I refer in particular to a letter I received from a Mrs McHugh of Roma. Mrs McHugh's son had a major operation in Brisbane which involved a laminectomy and a backbone graft/fusion. Members may or may not know that the operation prevents a patient from sitting for six weeks or more.

When the hospital endeavoured to obtain ambulance transport for the patient it was refused, much to the anguish of the medical staff and the patient's mother and wife. The patient's wife and mother then endeavoured to transport him back to Roma—a trip of more than seven hours—with him reclining on the bucket seat of their car. It was a very painful and difficult procedure for him to get in and out of the car, as members could well imagine. Medical advice was that the patient should get out of the car every hour on the seven-hour journey, but his wife and mother were unable to achieve this and were able to do this only three times over the seven hours.

This is a disgraceful situation that is occurring too regularly. Although the Minister has replied to Mrs McHugh's concern, there seem to be some discrepancies. The Minister states that QAS has no record of receiving communication from the doctor or hospital for ambulance transportation and that it would have been available had the physician authorised and requested it. This may be so, but one has to ask why. Why was there no request or record of request? Mrs McHugh can only go on what her son's doctor told her—that he had requested an ambulance.

The Minister states that Mrs McHugh's son's request for QAS Roma station staff to dress his surgical wound would have resulted in an examination by the ambulance officer and advice that the surgical wound appeared to be breaking down and sutures dislodged. Her son was particularly distressed because of the Minister's response. Her son and his wife were left standing on the footpath in pouring rain—

Time expired.
