



Speech by
Mr TERRY SULLIVAN
MEMBER FOR CHERMSIDE

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APPROPRIATION BILL
Estimates Committee E
Report

Mr SULLIVAN (ChermSIDE—ALP) (12.16 p.m.): I wish to speak on the Health aspects of the Estimates committee hearing. It is a shame that today we have seen an extension of the disgraceful performances of the Opposition spokesperson for Health over recent months. On a number of occasions, this person has preached the highest principles of behaviour that are needed in our society, but she is condemned by her own words and actions. Increasingly, the member for Maroochydore makes up stories without any factual basis, promotes untruths and simply tells lies in the Chamber. On an almost weekly basis she claims that a hospital is closing, yet none of those claims have eventuated. Unfortunately for the member, she has done this so often that even the media have stopped listening to her because they know that she is simply not telling the truth.

For example, about a month ago the member's claim about the Prince Charles Hospital was shown to be false. She said that people were being disadvantaged because services had been cut when in fact two new 12-strong community health teams had been put in place. It was a lie. She said that services were being cut because wards were being closed. Old wards were being closed because a new \$120m hospital wing was opened. The residents and the patients of the north side of Brisbane were provided with the most modern and up-to-date facilities. The false claim by the member for Maroochydore, the shadow Health Minister, was that services were being taken away. That was another absolute lie.

The member also claimed that services were being taken away from the mental health area because the Winston Noble Unit was being closed. It is correct that the 40 year old Winston Noble Unit was closed, because a new and thoroughly modern mental health unit has already been built and opened. Residents on the north side of Brisbane are being provided with the most modern health facilities that we can provide, yet the member opposite has claimed that we are taking mental health facilities away from people. Again, that was a lie.

I refer now to some of the more positive aspects from this positive Minister in the positive Beattie Government, which is actually doing things for people. One of the Government's biggest projects is continuing the Goss Government's 10-year rebuilding program, which will put some \$2.8 billion worth of new facilities into hospitals throughout Queensland. We are committed to continuing that program. Again, it was Labor that said, "Let's do a revamp of the hospital system and provide Queenslanders with the most modern and up-to-date health facilities throughout the State."

We are committed to preventive programs. For example, we have committed \$3m to the Strengthening Families Program. The program offers free parenting courses—the Positive Parenting Program, or PPP—at 30 locations throughout Queensland. The training programs have been offered by community health nurses who have been trained to lead group classes and to provide one-on-one advice to parents experiencing behavioural problems with children. We are also in the process of expanding the service into rural and remote areas, with 60 child health nurses to be trained from early next year. The expansion includes providing resources such as the self-help PPP program, which parents in remote areas can work through at their own pace. The feedback from this program has been phenomenal. The people who have gone through that program have said to members of Parliament and to the Minister that it has been one of the most remarkable things in which they have participated. Yesterday the member for Mundingburra highlighted the feedback from a program in her area and the positive results that have come from it.

The Opposition Health spokesperson is on the record attacking the Government for funding such programs. On 16 March in an interview on the ABC's Carolyn Tucker program on 4QR this

Government was attacked for spending money on "soft social welfare areas within the Health portfolio". It seems that the member for Maroochydore was referring to the Strengthening Families Program and our school nurse program. She claims to be pro families, yet she has been extremely anti-families and destructive of family support in her criticisms of this funding proposal. She is more interested in seeing victims than in trying to prevent people from becoming victims or patients. Fortunately, her views are not shared by her colleagues or by the general community.

In conclusion, I congratulate the Minister and her staff on the work they do. I pay special tribute to the nursing, administrative and support staff at the Prince Charles Hospital and at other health facilities within the Chermide electorate. They do tremendous work. They give of their best at the research and clinical facilities.

Time expired.
