



Speech by  
**Mr DENVER  
BEANLAND**

**MEMBER FOR INDOOROOPILLY**

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Hansard 6 September 2000

**HOSPITAL WAITING LISTS**

**Mr BEANLAND** (Indooroopilly—LP) (6.48 p.m.): I think the member for Barron River has waiting lists on her mind rather too much. Perhaps she should be thinking about those who cannot get on the waiting lists. This is a Minister who lurches from crisis to crisis. This is a Minister of a can't do Government. This record speaks for itself. What we have here are hospitals that lurch from crisis to crisis, as the Minister does.

We have budget blow-outs; we have category blow-outs. Category 1, the most urgent category, has blown out by 20% in the past 12 months. But there is not a word from the Minister! What do we have from the Minister? The Minister tries to say that the Category 1 waiting lists are getting better; they are not blowing out. I say to the Minister that they are getting worse. The facts speak for themselves. Of course, the Minister cannot read the facts. The Minister is too busy trying to create an impression and a perception, which is what this Government is all about. We know, of course, that this Government does not want to tell the public what it knows: do not let on what you know; laugh it off—except this Minister yells and shouts. She does not laugh it off at all.

This Government lurches from crisis to crisis. The Minister has lost the support of hospital staff, and that is why all these figures are coming out of the various hospitals. No matter which category one looks at, the waiting lists are getting longer, not shorter. Of course, urgent Category 1 cases have blown out by over 20%. If one looks at the published waiting list data, one sees that it is going from bad to worse. One should also look at what the shadow Minister tabled a while ago. For example, in the Nambour Hospital—just one hospital in this State—the waiting list for orthopaedics is something like 30 weeks.

**Miss Simpson:** And that's for appointments.

**Mr BEANLAND:** Yes, 30 weeks just for an appointment, and it is longer after that, of course. This is something that this Government does not want to know about.

As far as management practices and pressures placed on staff are concerned, one only has to look at what is happening in hospitals. The Minister again brushed this aside, as she likes to do. There have been problems with management on the Gold Coast because staff are under such enormous pressure. There was another instance of this in Townsville recently. The staff are not to blame; it is this cold-hearted, mean-spirited Minister who puts more pressure on her staff day by day. She loves to talk up the perceptions but does not deliver. This situation also occurred under the former Minister, the now Premier of this State. After 100 days of listening that Minister did not deliver either.

There have been cutbacks in intensive care services across-the-board. I notice that a number of members opposite talked about beds in ICUs, but of course they did not say whether there were staff available to look after those facilities. They did not say whether the beds were functioning and taking patients, but they said that there were some spaces. It is a bit like the Yes, Minister program I remember seeing about the perfect hospital with no patients. This Minister believes in the same thing: a perfect hospital to her is one which has no patients. That is how this Minister operates. What a farcical situation that is. However, that is the situation in relation to ICUs under this Government. It is the same situation across-the-board wherever one looks.

We are not just talking about the Nambour Hospital, the Royal Brisbane Hospital and the PA Hospital; we are talking about the QE II Hospital and the Logan Hospital. This Government has always wanted to cut and downgrade services at the QE II. It has been integrating those services with those of the PA Hospital and the Logan Hospital to downgrade them and cut them back. It is no wonder that the people who live in those areas are up in arms and rail against what this Government is doing in that regard.

There are problems in not only Categories 1, 2 and 3, ICUs, staff practices and blow-outs with budget problems but also in the outpatients area. There have been further closures and further reductions in services under this Minister and this Government. The Minister will continue to deny it, but the facts speak for themselves. Of course, the new category is the waiting list before one gets on the waiting list—the secret list that the Minister does not have. No wonder this Government laughs it off, because that is the only thing it understands. The Minister's reply in this debate tonight was poor. There was no substance whatsoever in the reply because the Minister has no basis for her amendment, and the public of Queensland know it. The Minister stands condemned by her own words for her lack of substance and lack of support.

Time expired.

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