



Speech by

Miss FIONA SIMPSON

MEMBER FOR MAROOCHYDORE

Hansard 6 December 2001

ROYAL BRISBANE HOSPITAL, BONE MARROW TRANSPLANT UNIT

Miss SIMPSON (Maroochydore—NPA) (10.18 a.m.): Who would be a whistleblower in Queensland Health when the minister is willing to side with bullies who have been shifted and demoted owing to their workplace performance. Health Minister Edmond's extraordinary attempt to cover her own failure to recruit and maintain staff in the bone marrow transplant ward is a disgrace. It also shows that the minister responsible for patient and staff care in this state not only condones the culture of bullying and intimidation in Queensland Health but also, after yesterday's performance, she is, in fact, the perpetrator of bullying.

What we have witnessed is the minister shooting the messenger and defaming the whistleblower, Wendy Erglis, even when the evidence is before her eyes—poor staffing numbers and extreme workloads while patients and donors who are clinically ready for bone marrow transplants face undue delays with tragic consequences. These patients are real people and they deserve to be represented. We will continue to do so despite the minister's manipulative response that these issues should not be raised in public. Ironically, the government is conducting an inquiry into bullying and there are other unions speaking up for members to express concern about the culture of bullying in Queensland Health, such as the ASU's Julie Bignall in a radio interview on 4 September 2001, when she said—

We get a lot of complaints from our members particularly in Queensland Health and a lot of those complaints centre on the inappropriate use of management processes by management themselves ... Certainly in Queensland Health we have a lot of concerns about the volume of complaints that we're getting these days.

Staff should always be able to raise issues of patient care with management without the threat of intimidation and discrimination. I seek leave of the House to table a document referred to by the Leader of the Opposition.

Leave granted.

Miss SIMPSON: However, as we have witnessed publicly this week, that does not happen in many parts of Queensland Health under this minister and senior bureaucrats, whose fanatical control of information puts honest people under intolerable pressure to lie or cover up.

Time expired.
