



Speech by

**Mrs J. SHELDON**

**MEMBER FOR CALOUNDRA**

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Hansard 29 May 2001

**SUNSHINE COAST, HOSPITAL WAITING LISTS**

**Mrs SHELDON** (Caloundra—Lib) (10.25 a.m.): I draw the attention of the House to the appalling state of waiting lists at the Nambour General Hospital and the Caloundra Hospital. This is a major concern to everyone on the Sunshine Coast, particularly many of the elderly people waiting for operations. I wish to draw a couple of examples to the attention of the House. The first is the plight of a 60-year-old woman with rheumatoid arthritis who was put on the hip replacement waiting list in October 1999. It took until 20 August before she was seen by a doctor. She was then told that it would be six to nine months before her operation would take place. At six months she was told that it would be at the very least another 12 months before that operation would occur. Unfortunately, this is a recurring tale. Elderly people on the list are on crutches and in pain. Because of a lack of funding to hospitals on the Sunshine Coast, this list continues to grow.

The second example is that of a woman with a leaking renal catheter who could not have her dialysis treatment because the catheter could not be fixed. She could not go to Nambour, although the urologists there were prepared to do the work, because there were no funds to do that work at Nambour. So she had to go to the Royal Brisbane Hospital. She was told there that she was literally on the 'never-never' waiting list, as there were many patients ahead of her. I intervened from my office and she finally did get that treatment. However, that sort of treatment should be available at the Nambour General Hospital, which is a major hospital on the Sunshine Coast.

It concerns me also that recently the AMA tried to do an independent survey of our hospitals to find out what the real waiting list situation was—not the phoney one the minister has on various web sites. The staff at these hospitals—I know this occurred on the Sunshine Coast—have been told not to comply with the AMA and that if any survey answers are to be sent back to them they must be screened by the minister first. This certainly smacks of Big Brother and interference in what the public needs, and should have a right, to know.

The other appalling situation at our hospitals on the Sunshine Coast—and I know this is the case elsewhere—concerns the dental clinics.

Time expired.

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