



Speech by

LEX BELL, MP

MEMBER FOR SURFERS PARADISE

Hansard 26 November 2003

QUEENSLAND HOSPITALS, RENAL DIALYSIS

Mr BELL (Surfers Paradise—Ind) (10.23 a.m.): I rise to draw to the attention of the House and the Minister for Health a matter of which the minister might not be aware, but it is a life and death matter and it is one that is critical. I am told that the government injected \$13 million towards public kidney dialysis as recently as last June, but I am also told by a renal specialist on the Gold Coast that not one new renal public patient has benefited from this money because the hospitals have appropriated it towards existing budget overruns.

This same renal specialist says that Princess Alexandra Hospital, the state's largest renal centre for dialysis, closed its doors to new patients for a few weeks earlier this year and the Gold Coast Hospital, closer to my electorate—

Mr PURCELL: What's the question, Mr Speaker?

Mr BELL: It is not a question.

Mr Purcell: Sorry.

Mr BELL: Thank you. The Gold Coast Hospital, closer to the electorate of Surfers Paradise, is currently at capacity with its renal patients. Unless there is additional facilities available at the Gold Coast Hospital urgently then new dialysis patients will have to be turned away. I am sure that no-one in this House would expect that, except for clinical reasons, a person needing kidney dialysis would be turned away.

Four new machines are required at the Gold Coast Hospital within the next 12 months to cater for the expected 30 additional new patients for renal dialysis at a cost of about \$100,000 for the machines and about \$40,000 for each of the new patients. I ask the minister to investigate this matter urgently. If the information given by this renal specialist is correct then the matter requires very, very urgent and critical attention. It is a life and death matter.