



Speech by

Robert Messenger

MEMBER FOR BURNETT

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HOSPITAL WAITING LISTS

Mr MESSENGER (Burnett—NPA) (6.20 pm): I rise to support the coalition's motion before the House. In doing so, I wish to congratulate the Queensland doctors, nurses and allied health professionals for putting in such a magnificent effort. It is their sterling efforts in the face of this Labor government's mismanagement, wastefulness, arrogance and vindictiveness that sees Queensland Health professionals go above and beyond the call of duty in saving the lives of many sick Queenslanders. I know firsthand through my own family's health problems, after two royal commissions and after speaking confidentially with many of these dedicated professionals just how hard they work to serve their community and how hard they work with so little in the way of government support to establish a good reputation.

This government, led by a desperate Premier and a succession of failed health ministers, out of incompetence or sheer bloody-mindedness—and I am yet to work out which—is successfully destroying not only health professionals' reputations but also the lives of Queensland families. The best example of this of course is at the Bundaberg Hospital, where this government hired and then covered up for a marginal psychopath who had an urge to cut and slash human flesh and who went on under the protection of the Labor health system to mutilate, disable and kill the people of Bundaberg and the Burnett.

One of the survivors of the Premier's former employee, 'Dr Death', is 18-year-old Katherine Buckley, who asked that I make this letter to Patel public, and I table a copy.

Tabled paper: Copy of letter (undated) from Katherine Buckley to Dr Jayant Patel.

It says—

Patel,

My name is Katherine Buckley from Bundaberg, Australia. I'm 18 years old; I have not even finished school yet. My life hasn't even really begun yet but to me it already feels like it's over.

I am going to make Katherine's voice heard in this chamber so that the Premier, who has offered her a pittance in his special compensation process, gets a chance to understand the level of pain and misery which his government is directly responsible for. The letter continues—

On November the 10th, 2004 my doctor referred me to you, I was sick, I'd lost a lot of weight and I was really scared that something bad was wrong with me. That day, my first visit with you was the worst day of my life and I'll never forget it. You told me that you were certain I had cancer. You assured me that everything would be fine. I was just 16; I thought I was going to die. Do you know what it feels like to be so close to death?

I always thought that I'd live a long fruitful life with a husband and children and love, although I didn't die physically a lot of me did die that day, life felt so meaningless and there was nothing that I could have done to change that.

On the 22nd on November, 2004, you performed bowel cancer surgery on me. You found nothing but you still took so much from me. You took my happiness, my self confidence, my beauty. You took everything from me that I had ever believed in in my entire life and all you left me with was nightmares, tears and scars both physically and mentally.

The things that you took from me are gone; I'll never get them back. This incident has left a huge hole in my heart and nothing will ever fill that hole. You took everything; I don't even feel like a normal human being anymore. Nothing will ever put my life back together; you destroyed it completely and even now so long after I still struggle to survive day to day life because of what you did to me.

I want to move on and salvage what's left of me but I need to know things first.

I need to know why you did this to me. Was it for the money or did you get satisfaction out of it? Why?

Do you have any guilt or any sympathy at all? Are you sorry for what you've done? Do you regret it at all?

Do you feel anything at all for the pain that you've caused me? Do you care that you ruined my life?

I need to know answers, I think it is about this all the time. I can't sleep, I can't concentrate on anything. I need to know and you are the only person that can answer my questions.

There is more to this letter. Katherine is very disappointed. This young victim has been ripped open and ripped off by this Labor government, which expects her to take a compensation amount that any whiplash victim might anticipate. She is not the only one who has been revictimised. This government has lost all respectability and decency and hides its wickedness behind confidentiality clauses and smart-mouthed government lawyers.