




Speech by

Jo-Ann Miller

MEMBER FOR BUNDAMBA

Hansard Tuesday, 11 September 2012

QUEENSLAND HEALTH, JOBS

 **Mrs MILLER** (Bundamba—ALP) (12.17 pm): The people of Queensland are very angry and confused by the contradictory statements of the Minister for Health, also known as 'Foghorn Leghorn', regarding the direction of this LNP government in relation to our health system. Health workers are fearful of losing their jobs. The definitions of who is a front-line worker and what is a front-line service seem to change from week to week and day to day.

The promise of additional funding is a blatant untruth, as regional and metropolitan hospital and health service boards are now planning further staff cuts. The minister needs to make clear who is going to lose their jobs and when. He needs to be honest about which health services he says we can no longer afford. It is not good enough for him to say that he takes 'full responsibility' for job cuts but then hide behind the local boards he has created when it comes to service cuts. You cannot remove 2,754 full-time equivalent positions from our health system without adversely impacting services and patient care. It is impossible. Dr Alex Markwell, president of the AMA, states—

There is no way that patient service ... will not be affected—

as a result of these cuts. These job cuts are on top of the sackings in June of 3,000 health workers in rolling temporary and casual positions. With the cuts to grant funded community health projects and programs, it is clear that more than 7,000 individual health workers will lose their jobs in the first year of this Newman LNP government. These are real people losing real health jobs. I would like to remind the minister that the LNP said as part of its election mantra—

An LNP Government will also commit to no forced redundancies.

Restructuring will be managed through natural attrition, career advancement and training opportunities.

Well, the pigs are flying all over Queensland today! No-one believes the LNP anymore and no-one trusts the LNP anymore. Whilst this government has promised more resources for front-line services, in Health this appears to be very narrowly focused on sensitive indicators like emergency department waiting times and elective surgery waiting lists. All other Queensland services, even in hospitals, appear now to be no longer front line, and we heard that this morning because the Premier did not have a clue what the difference is between front-line jobs and front-line services. He did not know what he was talking about because he did not know that the tuberculosis service is a front-line service. Because what have they done? They have dismantled it! Of course the minister needs to understand that front-line services are very important, and he obviously did not listen when he was younger to the saying that prevention is better than cure. I also table for the benefit of the House the media release from the AMAQ in relation to what is happening in Queensland today.

Tabled paper: Media release, dated 7 September 2012, by the Australian Medical Association Queensland Branch titled 'Doctors, health workers unite to battle Qld health cuts' [\[952\]](#).

The health minister claims that he is increasing the Health budget by \$800 million. Oh, yeah? The people of Queensland do not believe it, because he is sacking thousands of health workers. He claims that the forecast growth for this year in the Health budget is new money. No-one believes the minister, no-one believes the LNP government anymore and no-one trusts this LNP government. As I said, in Queensland Health many of the health workers are now calling those opposite the 'DLNP government'. Do members

know what that stands for? The 'decapitation LNP government', because they have decapitated public servants, they are decapitating jobs, they are decapitating services and they are decapitating lifestyles. For every LNP member of parliament known as 'MP', from this day onwards you will be known as 'MA'. Why?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Berry): Member for Bundamba, could you please direct your comments through the chair.

Mrs MILLER: Thank you very much for your advice, Mr Deputy Speaker. So every LNP MP will now be known as 'MAs'. They will be known as 'morgue attendants' because they have got rid of so many services. This will be a one-term 'DLNP government'.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member's time has expired.

Mrs Miller: Make them one term only—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I call the member for Everton.