



Speech By  
**Yvette D'Ath**


**MEMBER FOR REDCLIFFE**

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## **PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENTS**

### **National Disability Insurance Scheme**

 **Ms D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (3.03 pm): The National Disability Insurance Scheme is being introduced across Australia to provide individuals with a disability choice over what services they receive and from whom they receive these services. This is a proud Labor initiative, a once-in-a-generation reform that has the potential to transform the lives of Australians with a disability, their carers and their families. Somehow, the Newman government has interpreted this national social reform as, 'We need to privatise disability services in Queensland.' But the NDIS is not about privatisation; it is about choice. This interpretation and the government's action are not the result of national reforms and do not stem from social policy development. The government's privatisation of disability services is the direct result of the recommendations of the Costello audit charade. Newman's mate, Peter Costello, said that the government could make a quick dollar by privatising services that are meant to support some of the most vulnerable Queenslanders.

This mode of thinking focuses solely on cutting costs and slashing services, not on the provision of quality services by experienced and hardworking staff. Disability Services Queensland employees working in accommodation support and respite services have spent the last two years in limbo not knowing whether their positions will be terminated by this government. DSQ employees are decent, hardworking Queenslanders, of whom many have been caring for the same client for 20 years, essentially becoming part of their family. That means that they understand their client, they can read their moods, they know their triggers and they can anticipate how their client will react in certain situations. These are not things that can be learned through reading a case report; these are things that one learns through years of interacting with and caring for an individual one on one.

It is not a requirement of the NDIS that registered service providers be non-government organisations. This is yet another example of the Newman government making decisions that will have detrimental effects on people's lives without listening and without consultation. Rather than embracing choice and providing clients and their families with real choice, this LNP government is taking away choice. Dismantling DSQ is removing a client's choice and this is the real risk with the ideological pursuit of this government in embracing the Costello recommendations. DSQ deals with the most difficult and complex cases—clients who will be at real risk of falling through the cracks under this privatisation model. These decisions are affecting people living in communities right across Queensland. Carers are scared that they are going to lose their jobs and families are scared that their loved ones will lose their carer, who they have grown to trust and depend on over a long period.

It is not good enough. It is time this government started listening to Queenslanders and stopped its ideological moves to privatise services that are being provided by hardworking men and women serving vulnerable clients.