




Speech By
Hon. Cameron Dick

MEMBER FOR WOODRIDGE

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PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Elective Surgery, Waiting Times

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (10.24 am): The report compiled by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare—a federal government body—titled *Elective surgery waiting times 2014-15: Australian hospital statistics* released today shows that the average waiting time for an elective surgery procedure in Queensland is 27 days. That means that Queenslanders' wait for elective surgery is eight days fewer than the 2014-15 national median wait of 35 days.

We are going to attack all waiting lists in Queensland, looking at the full patient journey, not just elective surgery. That is starting to show results. Since we have come to government we have seen a reduction of almost 20 per cent in those long-waits—the waiting list for the waiting list. Those people waiting for a specialist appointment in a hospital is down almost 20 per cent. What has happened in surgery? Let us look at the data as at 1 August, after this report was completed. What was the percentage of ready-for-surgery patients on the elective surgery waiting list who were within the clinically recommended time for treatment? Of those people, 99.4 per of them were being treated within the clinically recommended time. In terms of category 1 patients, the percentage is 99.9 per cent; for category 2, it is 98.3 per cent; for category 3, it is 99.9 per cent. Those percentages were as of 1 August and on our watch.

All of this has happened because of increased federal funding. We had a federal Labor government that put money into elective surgery. It put money into national partnership agreements. All of that is now at threat, with \$11.8 billion that was coming to Queensland to be ripped out of our system. Not one of those members opposite stood up to Tony Abbott or has stood up to Malcolm Turnbull and said, 'Give Queensland its fair share.' An amount of \$11.8 billion is going to be ripped out.

I will tell members these percentages did not have anything to do with that discredited wait-time gimmick, which was all about spin doctors and not real doctors. That is what the Leader of the Opposition was into. I ask members to look at his record. No wonder the member for Everton is doing the audition for the backbench today. No wonder the member for Everton is circling. What happened under the watch of the Leader of the Opposition? All of a sudden the personnel file of the member for Stafford, Dr Anthony Lynham, was stolen and released publicly. That happened when the Leader of the Opposition was the health minister. That happened under his watch. What else did he do? He stood up at a press conference and used the names of the innocent children of a member of parliament. He circulated their names to the media to score a political point. That is the sort of leader he is. No wonder the members opposite are split down the middle. They know that there is no future in that behaviour. There is no future in that sort of conduct by a leader.

Of course, one record that the Leader of the Opposition will not talk about is the thousands of people who were sacked from the health system in Queensland under his watch—1,800 nurses and midwives—thousands of people who went out of the system while he was the minister. He is dishonest, desperate and has no idea or policy for Queensland.