




Speech By
Hon. Cameron Dick

MEMBER FOR WOODRIDGE

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PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Public Hospital Waiting Lists

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (2.57 pm): I am delighted to be able to say a few words in the House today—some truth, not spin, about the state of waiting lists in Queensland. The member for Caloundra just said in the House, in reference to the Queensland Audit Office report, that there were 356 long waits now in Queensland. I will check the transcript. You said there are 356 long waits for surgery now. If that is what you said, that is deliberately misleading the House. You read the report. You know that number was at December 2015, not now. If you said 356 now, I will write to the Speaker on that.

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, I know you are on a roll, but I would ask you to refer to the member for Caloundra by the appropriate title.

Mr DICK: Thank you, Mr Speaker. If the member for Caloundra said that, I will write to you.

What are the numbers now? What happened? When we came to office in February 2015 there were 324 long waits for surgery, not 74. Again, that is misleading the House. The members opposite deliberately leave out children waiting for surgery at Lady Cilento Children's Hospital. Some 324 were waiting as at 2015. I have said that in the House previously. What is the number today? As at 1 April the number is 186—from 324 to 186. That is the number as at 1 April.

In terms of outpatients, the member for Southern Downs left 100,000 people waiting in the waiting room. The member for Caloundra was in the cabinet. He did nothing about them. He completely ignored them. This government will not ignore them. This government will not turn its face away from Queenslanders waiting for a specialist outpatient appointment. There were 100,000 when we came to office; there are 85,000 now. That is what this government delivered. When demand is going up, the lists go up, but the number of patients waiting longer than clinically recommended—and that is the measure: patients should not wait longer than doctors have recommend—has gone down. The number has gone down for both surgery and outpatient appointments.

What was the legacy of the member for Southern Downs? A risky opening of the Lady Cilento Children's Hospital, a risky closing of the Barrett Adolescent Centre, a trail of sacked health workers across the length and breadth of Queensland, and savage cuts to mental health. If the member for Caloundra wants to defend the Leader of the Opposition, let him do that because Queenslanders know that legacy. That is why Queenslanders voted Labor at the last state election, because we will be genuine, we will be realistic and we will be straight with the people of Queensland about these waiting lists. What Queensland needs is the truth, not more spin doctors whom all of those members opposite represent.