




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR SURFERS PARADISE

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PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Wolston Park, Redress Scheme Report

 **Mr LANGBROEK** (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (2.50 pm): The Palaszczuk Labor government has had some trouble with transparency and accountability when it comes to the reports it has commissioned during its time in government. Time and time again we have seen this Labor government commission report after report but Queenslanders are none the wiser, with much of the information heavily redacted or never released. Perhaps the most hurtful and most distressing example of this is in the case of the Wolston Park redress scheme.

At the outset I say that the LNP team stands shoulder to shoulder with the Wolston Park women. We would like to thank the consultant, Betty Taylor, for her sensitivity, respect and advocacy throughout this process. Throughout this term we have seen the health minister continually shift the blame to save face, whether it is to the HHSs or to any other entity within or engaged by the department, but in this instance it has gone too far, with the minister suggesting during estimates that any delay in the reporting time lies with the consultant. Hurtfully, we saw the minister tell the committee—

She—

Betty Taylor—

has not finalised that—

the report—

yet but we anticipate it to be finalised shortly.

I note that his director-general said that they had not even received the report. We know that this is not true because the report was finalised and on 27 July this year the report's author told one survivor that it was finalised and with the department. Above all, this was a hurtful and disappointing inference to make in a sensitive situation, where the survivors were faced with confusion as to the status of the report and the validity of the information they were being given throughout the process. I will be writing to the Speaker as it appears that the minister misled the committee. The Wolston Park women deserved better back then and they deserve better now.

There are further concerns about several changes that the minister's department has requested to make to the report. Whilst two minor amendments have been made in good faith, there are two requested adjustments that are of particular concern, the first being the redaction of the list of drugs used and the second being the redaction of the terms 'drugs' and 'chemical straitjacketing', with those words to be replaced with the word 'medication'. According to the *Cambridge Dictionary*, the term 'medication' means 'a medicine, or a set of medicines or drugs used to improve a particular condition or illness'. There is no doubt that these redactions and changes will downplay the horrific abuse that occurred at Wolston Park. The redaction of the drugs used as well as the use of the term 'medication' in the place of 'drugs' and 'straitjacketing' will have implications on the interpretation of the report and the extent of the abuse that occurred within the Wolston Park facility.

The minister was quick to get on the defensive during estimates, saying that he was not hiding anything. I can assure the House: the LNP has been sensitive and respectful with this matter and with our dealings with these women. They want the truth. They do not want a sugar-coated report. They do not want to be misled as to the status of the report and the reason. They want a respectful and accurate report and the LNP will always support that. The minister cannot say that he is being sensitive and respectful when he is trashing the very process which will provide these women with an accurate and respectful report.