




Speech By
Aaron Harper

MEMBER FOR THURINGOWA

Record of Proceedings, 31 October 2018

MOTION

Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services

 **Mr HARPER** (Thuringowa—ALP) (5.37 pm): Unsurprisingly, I rise to speak against the motion moved by the member for Mudgeeraba. I will tell members why. Clearly it is 31 October. Why else would the LNP opposition launch a Halloween scare campaign against our hospitals? Those opposite are trying cheap tricks to spook Queenslanders into thinking they will not receive great care. The LNP and the member for Mudgeeraba have done nothing but talk down our health system. They spend every day moaning and groaning and criticising our hospitals and health workers, trying to undermine public confidence in our hospitals for their own political benefit. Our hardworking doctors, nurses, health practitioners and paramedics work tirelessly across Queensland to provide excellent care to all Queenslanders. I should know. As a paramedic of 25 years, I know exactly how hard our health people work across this state. I will not knock any of our health professionals. I will leave that to the LNP.

Whether people live in my electorate in North Queensland or in the electorate of Mudgeeraba in the south, they have access to a world-class health system. Here we are again listening to the LNP's attempt to trick Queenslanders instead of helping to treat them. In true Halloween style, the member for Mudgeeraba has come out in fancy dress today as someone who cares about Queenslanders and their health. She is masquerading as someone who cares about better health care, even though she is a member of the party that sacked 4,000 Health staff—1,800 nurses and midwives, some of those nurses in my town of Townsville. We can see through the trickery, and so can Queenslanders.

The member for Mudgeeraba has said that the health system is in crisis at least 10 times since becoming the shadow health spokesperson. She has said that our doctors and nurses are not delivering world-class health care at least 10 times in her role. This is unfounded hysteria which belongs in a scary movie perhaps titled 'Another Scary Movie'—the ghosts of the LNP, here to scare you now in the dead of night! Today's motion is no different; it is just another crazy, lazy attempt by the LNP to get some runs on the scoreboard. Those opposite are even too lazy to source their own material. They just read the health story in the paper and go on the attack. It is clear they have not even read the report it relates to.

Their alphabet list today consists of old topics that have been widely canvassed and well ventilated both in this House and through the media. Instead of asking new questions—just like every day in question time—they are just blowing hot air, blowing up deluxe! For cheap political points the LNP is willing to use untruths and poor reporting to disparage 90,000 hardworking doctors, nurses and health professionals.

Unlike the LNP, we believe that all Queenslanders—no matter where they live or where they are from—deserve the best possible health care. That is why the Palaszczuk government has a record budget of \$18 billion this year. There are no tricks from us. We just deliver. It was Labor that delivered the new \$8 million Townsville Hospital paediatric ward that the Premier opened this year. It was Labor that delivered the new mental health facility in Townsville Hospital. It is Labor that is delivering a new

ambulance station in my electorate in Kirwan. It was Labor that restored front-line health staff such as nurses and midwives in Townsville Hospital. Our hospital and health service improved in all emergency department, elective surgery and specialist outpatients seen and treat-in-time rates last financial year. Some 100 per cent of elective surgery patients were treated within clinically recommended times across all three categories. That is an incredible statistic, but do we hear members of the opposition talking up Townsville Hospital? No. They just go back to whining and moaning.

I know the people in my electorate are proud of our local hospital and its staff and our Ambulance Service. It is time the LNP stopped bagging our health system and started talking up our hospitals, because Queensland has some of the best health services in the world. Quite often I am asked why I wanted to do this job. It was after I saw people in the Ambulance Service—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Pause the clock. I cannot hear the member's contribution.

Mr HARPER: I came here because I saw people get sacked in my own profession—our first-aid people, our baby capsule people. It was the current member for Broadwater as the then member for Mundingburra who had his own baby capsules fitted and then sacked Denis. That is disgraceful! I will stand up for those people in the health sector.

(Time expired)