




Speech By
Brent Mickelberg

MEMBER FOR BUDERIM

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MOTION

Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services

 **Mr MICKELBERG** (Buderim—LNP) (5.20 pm): I rise today to speak in support of the member for Mudgeeraba's private member's motion which condemns the health minister, Steven Miles, for his many failures. If one thing has come through loud and clear since I was elected this time last year it is that Queenslanders are sick and tired of politicians who fail to take responsibility and who are only interested in looking after themselves. People are sick and tired of governments that are motivated by ideological hatred and governments that are only interested in the pursuit of power and the maintenance of it.

If we are looking for an example of someone who fails to take responsibility and is only interested in looking after his own self-interest, we need look no further than the Minister for Health. Here is a man who, when the going got tough in the seat of Mount Coot-tha, decided to cut and run for another safe Labor seat rather than stand and fight for the community that he supposedly cared for; a man who has shown time and time again that he goes missing when the going gets tough; a man who hides behind bureaucrats rather than fronting up to answer the hard questions on issues like the tissue bank bungle, reports into the death of Manmeet Sharma and the renaming of the Lady Cilento hospital.

Over the past 12 months I have had cause to visit the emergency department at the Sunshine Coast University Hospital three times. At the outset let me state that nurses, doctors and the support staff at the Sunshine Coast University Hospital do their best to provide patient care in a timely manner. It is clear, however, that the Sunshine Coast University Hospital is heaving under the weight of demand and Sunshine Coast residents are suffering as a consequence. Both anecdotal experience and the raw statistics paint a picture of a hospital that needs investment now to meet the health needs of Sunshine Coast residents. In August just past, 33.4 per cent of patients at the Sunshine Coast University Hospital were not attended to within clinically recommended times.

What have we seen this government do to address the problem? Through mismanagement and a failure to prioritise the demonstrated needs of Sunshine Coast residents rather than fast-track the delivery of the Sunshine Coast University Hospital stage 2, we have seen this government fail on their original commitment to deliver stage 2 by 30 June this year. This is just another in a long list of failures from this Palaszczuk Labor government. Perhaps most disappointingly we saw the minister seek to misrepresent the facts by blaming a typo in a government fact sheet for delays to stage 2 of the Sunshine Coast University Hospital.

It is time for the Premier to start governing for all Queenslanders, not just those who live in safe Labor seats. Members of this House are aware of my passion to ensure that all Queenslanders are able to access health care to address their mental health concerns. In October last year I was heartened to hear the then health minister, Cameron Dick, say that a new mental health facility for the people of Mackay would be opened in June 2018. Disappointingly, however, it has now come to light that the planned unit will not open until June next year. We can now see just how hollow Labor's election

promises are. They say one thing before an election and deliver another after an election. The Minister for Health is more interested in waging an ideological crusade to change the name of a hospital rather than delivering better care for patients.

One of the fundamental premises of the Westminster system is ministerial accountability. The Minister for Health and his colleague, the Minister for Transport and Main Roads, have consistently shown they believe it is appropriate to ignore this convention. Given that they continue to fail to accept responsibility, the time has long passed for the Premier to show some leadership and relieve them of their ministerial responsibilities. It is time for this government to put patients before politics and start delivering the world-class health system that all Queenslanders deserve.

The Premier says that she wants to run an open and transparent government, but to date we have only seen a culture of arrogance, hypocrisy and secrecy that puts the interests of the Palaszczuk Labor government ahead of the people of Queensland. Queenslanders know when they are being sold a pup and they know that 'Dr Dolittle' is more interested in keeping his job—

Mr SPEAKER: Members will be referred to by their correct title. I ask you to withdraw.

Mr MICKELBERG: They know that the Minister for Health is more interested in keeping his job than looking after the interests of all Queenslanders.