




Speech By
Ros Bates

MEMBER FOR MUDGEERABA

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MOTION

Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (4.59 pm): I move—

That this House condemns the health minister for his policy failures and wrong priorities, including:

- (a) changing the name of the Lady Cilento Children's Hospital, without speaking to the Cilento family beforehand, rather than improving health services for our sickest kids;
- (b) failing to publicly explain the 'tissue bank' matter where cancerous tissue was given to four children, and the release of the mental health reports relating to the death of Manmeet Sharma;
- (c) failing to accept Westminster ministerial responsibility and seeking to divert blame to his department for an 'error of judgement made at middle management level' when the Gold Coast HHS tried to outsource services provided to senior residents under the Commonwealth Home Support Program;
- (d) labelling the rollout of the integrated electronic Medical Record an 'incredible success' despite doctors losing confidence, regular system outages and a Crime and Corruption Commission investigation;
- (e) breaking a pre-election commitment by delaying a new mental health facility in Mackay by one year;
- (f) only providing an additional six beds for the Ipswich Hospital which is still more than four years away and well behind forecasted requirements;
- (g) overseeing ambulance ramping levels at 25 per cent that has continued to increase;
- (h) blaming a typo in a government fact sheet for delays to stage 2 of the Sunshine Coast University Hospital;
- (i) breaking an election commitment by delaying the rollout of the new ice rehabilitation facility in Rockhampton;
- (j) cutting funding to the IDEAS van; and
- (k) ongoing threats to regional maternity services.

What is quite clear is that the health minister is not up to the job and he should be sacked. This is a minister who hides behind bureaucrats when he does not want to address an issue, he blames bureaucrats when the issue is too hot to handle and he needs a scapegoat, he regularly goes missing in action to avoid any responsibility and accountability, and he refuses to front up when the tough questions are asked of him.

Ms Fentiman interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Minister for Training and Skills Development, please direct your comments through the chair.

Ms BATES: Thank you, Mr Speaker. The member for Waterford is interjecting but is not in her own seat. It goes from bad to worse to just plain embarrassing. Queenslanders have had a bellyful of his 'dog ate my homework' excuses. He is the Minister for Health on \$330,000 a year and the buck stops with him. The minister's list of policy failures is mounting and he has not even been in the job for a year. In fact there are so many failures he has presided over but the word limit of this motion restricted my ability to list more.

Members, this is a serious issue. The Health portfolio is the biggest portfolio in the budget. Despite that, we have a public health system lurching from crisis to crisis. Queenslanders deserve a world-class public health system and the Palaszczuk government is not delivering. The health minister's policy failures and twisted priorities are a stark reminder that the public health system under Labor is lurching back to the bad old days under Anna Bligh.

Everyone still remembers the fake Tahitian prince ripping millions off the taxpayer and the \$1.25 billion Health payroll debacle that still continues on after almost a decade—where nurses are still being harassed for overpayments as small as \$50. As a nurse, I know how important it is to make sure our front-line staff are supported with the resources they need. Unlike the health minister and the Minister for Education, I have worked in EDs, operating theatres, surgical wards and medical wards. Unlike our health minister, who is a pretend doctor—

Ms Grace interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Minister for Industrial Relations, you will put your comments through the chair.

Ms BATES: Unlike our health minister, who is a pretend doctor, I am not a pretend nurse. The LNP had record health budgets as well, but we actually improved patient care for Queenslanders. The latest Queensland Health hospital performance data shows that our elective surgery wait times are blowing out under Labor yet again. Our emergency departments are bursting at the seams and ambulance ramping continues to increase. Fewer patients are being seen within clinically recommended time frames, putting their health and their recovery at risk. Ambulance ramping continues to increase. It is now up to 25 per cent across the state, and in some hospitals it is double.

We will have a lot more to say when it comes to the bungled rollout of the integrated electronic Medical Record system, which has all the hallmarks of another Health payroll debacle and, worse still, could impact on patient care. Our hospitals are under immense pressure. We only have to look at the government's own statistics. These are not just numbers on a spreadsheet. It is your mother, or your son, or your close family friend. It is time for the Premier and the health minister to stop playing politics and start putting patients first. The LNP actually focused on improving patient care. We ended Labor's monolithic and centralised control of Queensland Health by creating 16 local hospital and health boards.

Ms Fentiman interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Minister for Training and Skills Development! Pause the clock. All members, it is not acceptable to interject across the chamber yelling 'you' at other members. That is personal. If you wish to take the call, please speak in the debate. Other than that, cease these personal interjections.

Ms BATES: We doubled the subsidy to help patients travel to our hospitals, helping rural and regional Queenslanders get access to the services they needed. We reopened regional maternity services that were actually shut down by the previous Bligh Labor government. We appointed the state's first-ever Mental Health Commissioner and ensured the new Mental Health Commission received the resources they needed. We delivered major improvements to surgery waiting times. The LNP's record investment in Queensland Health meant similar improvements in emergency departments. Ambulance ramping reduced under the LNP and we cleared Labor's long-wait public dental list.

The health of Queenslanders is too important to risk a do-nothing health minister clearly out of his depth, not across his brief and not up to the job. The minister likes to trot out the glib political lines and play political blame games. He should just do his job. It is quite clear the health minister is not up to it. His policy failures are mounting. His priorities are twisted, with the extraordinary decision to rename the Lady Cilento Children's Hospital. The health minister is not up to the job. It is time the Premier showed some leadership on health and sacked her Dr Dolittle incompetent minister—

Dr Miles: Mr Speaker—

Ms BATES:—and I commend the motion to the House.

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, please do not rise to your feet while the member still has time on the clock. It was disrespectful to the member who had the call.