



Speech By  
**Joseph Kelly**


**MEMBER FOR GREENSLOPES**

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Record of Proceedings, 23 October 2019

**MOTION**

**Queensland Health**

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (5.15 pm): The members of this House will be collectively shocked and amazed to find that I oppose this motion. Let me call it a ridiculous motion. When the House had the opportunity to vote on the issue of introducing safe—I emphasise ‘safe’—nurse-to-patient and safe midwife-to-patient ratios, two nurses in this House voted against that. I vowed that day that I would take the opportunity to point out to Queenslanders that there were nurses in this House who voted against the interests of nurses and against the interests of patients. I thought that would be a difficult thing to do, but it seems that every other week the member for Mudgeeraba comes in here and provides yet another opportunity for me to stand up and remind the people of Queensland that two nurses in this House voted against the interests of patients.

I turn to the motion. I want to talk about priorities. I want to compare LNP and Labor priorities. Let’s start with nurses and health workers. What were the priorities of the LNP? I think it can be summarised with the word ‘sack’. They sacked nurses and they sacked other health workers. How do I know this? It is not an intellectual exercise for me. I was there. I watched it happening.

Let us look at what the Labor Party has done as a priority in nursing and healthcare work. We have introduced safe nurse-to-patient and midwife-to-patient ratios. The research is clear: these ratios are saving lives. We have reinstated nurses and other healthcare workers. In fact, since the 2015 election we have hired 2,012 more doctors, 6,252 more nurses and midwives, 511 more paramedics and 1,806 more other health professionals. Just this financial year we are expecting to hire nearly 800 more nurses, 200 more doctors, 250 more health professionals and 200 more ambulance officers. We have also established and funded the positions of nurse navigators. These are our priorities.

Let’s talk about areas of priority for the LNP. Let’s talk about population and public health. What did they do there? They decimated the safety and quality units in Queensland Health. That had a devastating effect—

**Ms Bates** interjected.

**Mr KELLY:** As devastating as your failure to vote for ratios.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The member for Greenslopes will put his comments through the chair.

**Mr KELLY:** They defunded community organisations. When those organisations tried to fulfil their important role to stand up for people in the community and speak about health issues they were gagged. What have we done? We have re-funded those organisations, established Health and Wellbeing Queensland and set up My Health for Life, a program that brings together the Stroke Foundation, the Heart Foundation and Diabetes Queensland. We are out there promoting community health and population health.

What about the LNP’s priorities when it comes to sexual health? Funding for the Queensland AIDS Council was cut. There was the establishment of the HIV Foundation, which was a purely cynical political exercise. There were cuts in services, particularly in Indigenous communities and Torres Strait

Islander communities. They were very shocking cuts. In fact, prior to 2012 syphilis had effectively been eradicated in Queensland, but the LNP's funding cut which shut down those programs in Indigenous communities has brought it back and there have been 1,336 cases linked to this outbreak in Indigenous communities since 2011. Our priority has been to focus on re-funding those organisations and re-establishing those organisations that are providing support such as the Queensland AIDS Council. These are the things that we have listed as a priority.

It would be remiss of me not to talk about the priorities in terms of adolescent mental health. It is simple to compare—that is, shutting down the Barrett adolescent mental health services with the devastating impacts or what we have prioritised—

**Ms Bates:** Read the Coroner's report.

**Mr KELLY:** We have prioritised rebuilding, member for Mudgeeraba, the Barrett mental health service. Our priorities are clear. Our priorities are the right priorities. Those opposite have the wrong priorities, and not voting for patient ratios—

*(Time expired)*