




Speech By
Leanne Linard

MEMBER FOR NUDGE

Record of Proceedings, 30 April 2019

HEALTH LEGISLATION (SCOPE OF PRACTICE) AMENDMENT REGULATION

Disallowance of Statutory Instrument

 **Ms LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (6.24 pm): I rise to speak against the disallowance motion and in support of our government's decision to return the name of the Queensland Children's Hospital to the Queensland Children's Hospital. As I have said before in this House in previous debates on this topic, everyone involved with the original election commitment, site announcement, design and construction of this project knows the hospital was always to be known as the Queensland Children's Hospital. Media articles, from the announcement of a new Queensland paediatric hospital in 2006 through to 2013 when the name was changed, referred to it as such. To select just one of many articles, in 2009 when the site of the new paediatric hospital was announced the media release said this—

The government's vision for a new Queensland Children's Hospital goes far beyond providing excellent facilities and services in Brisbane, it also extends to the coordination of wider tertiary paediatric services around the state. The Queensland Children's Hospital will be the hub of a statewide network. Mr Robertson, Labor Health Minister at the time, said a unique agreement between Mater Health Services and Queensland Health secures the new Queensland Children's Hospital. Further, 'The new Queensland Children's Hospital will be governed and managed entirely by Queensland Health.' Mr Robertson said.

The government, the national and state media, the medical profession, the community—everyone—knew and referred to the hospital as the Queensland Children's Hospital. That is until December 2013, when the former Newman LNP government announced the renaming of the hospital without consultation—without consultation with the community stakeholders engaged in the project who were supportive of the hospital's original name, the Queensland Children's Hospital. It has been a cause of concern ever since. On 24 July last year members of the Children's Health Queensland Medical Staff Association met with the minister urging a change of name back to the Queensland Children's Hospital. Three months after that first meeting with the Minister for Health, Steven Miles, the Children's Health Queensland Medical Staff Association presented a petition with almost 900 staff signatures calling for the facility's name to change. They have campaigned to reverse the name ever since the former Newman government suddenly renamed the facility in late 2013. For five years they had campaigned.

Why is a name so important? The Children's Health Queensland Medical Staff Association—doctors, nurses and health professionals employed by the hospital itself—have long been concerned that the name change was not adequately reflecting what the hospital is: our premier public, tertiary, paediatric facility for Queensland. They passionately argued that the hospital was not easily recognisable in the national and international medical research community, forgoing opportunities for collaboration and affiliations in research and learning, further citing that patients and their families were often confused by the Lady Cilento Children's Hospital name. The name not having wide public recognition, families believed it to be a private hospital and that confusion may cause Queenslanders to avoid or delay seeking treatment for a child for fear that they may have to pay for care at the hospital or that they are out of the catchment.

Research commissioned by Queensland Health in July of last year supported these claims by doctors that the name confused patients. On this issue the government and opposition agree: a name is important. What we do not agree on and what appears to have been lost to the member for Mudgeeraba and those opposite is that this is actually about Queensland children and their families—nothing else, not anyone else. This is about Queensland children and families. Those doctors, nurses and medical staff, the hospital foundation, the directors of paediatrics at Cairns, Bundaberg, Townsville, Hervey Bay, Toowoomba, Prince Charles, Logan, Sunshine Coast University, Gold Coast University, Redcliffe, Ipswich and the Children's Hospital and Health Board, who all wrote in support of the name change, who are the ones who called for the change, are the very people saving the lives of Queensland's sickest children. Their views should matter and those views should be afforded significant weight in this discussion, yet their concerns and calls for change have been continuously dismissed by those opposite as they are again being tonight.

I think it is deeply regrettable that this debate ever had to happen, particularly for any unnecessary offence that has been caused to the Cilento family. The opposition has continued to make this issue, an issue of their making, about anything but what and those who it is actually about. Those doctors, nurses and medical staff, the hospital foundation, the directors of paediatrics across Queensland and the Children's Hospital and Health Board, who are the ones who called for the change, are not interested in the politics of this chamber; they are interested in doing their job and saving the lives of Queensland's sickest children.

Those people believe passionately that Queensland's tertiary children's hospital should be known as just that: the Queensland Children's Hospital. I know just how passionately they believe that, because the doctor who presented the petition on behalf of the Queensland Medical Staff Association is a constituent of my electorate and he and his wife, also a paediatric doctor, like countless other doctors, nurses and staff of the Children's Hospital who live in the Nudgee electorate, have continued to raise this issue with me. For us as a government, this is about Queensland children and their families: nothing else, not anyone else. This is about Queensland children and families.

I thank the minister for listening to the Queensland medical community and for acting to return the hospital to its original name. It has been a divisive debate—disappointingly so—but it is also time to move forward. In 2016-17, the Queensland Children's Hospital admitted over 40,000 children and young people as inpatients. It provided 227,919 specialist outpatient appointments—

Mrs Frecklington: Relevance, relevance, relevance.

Ms LINARD:—and attended to 66,760 emergency presentations, one of them my own son. I am providing statistics about the Queensland Children's Hospital and you still do not think that is relevant. You clearly do not get the issue at all.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Stewart): Order! Through the chair.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise on a point of order on relevance, as the Manager of Opposition Business just stood on—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, member for Nanango. There is no point of order.

Ms LINARD: I take this opportunity to thank the staff, nurses, doctors and health professionals who work with great skill and passion at the Queensland Children's Hospital to provide care to Queensland children and families when they are at their most vulnerable. We will always listen and we will always support you.