



Speech By  
**Mark Robinson**


**MEMBER FOR OODGEROO**

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Record of Proceedings, 23 October 2019

**MOTION**

**Queensland Health**

 **Dr ROBINSON** (Oodgeroo—LNP) (5.20 pm): I rise to speak in support of the motion moved by the shadow health minister. What is clear to the people of Queensland is that they cannot trust Labor with their health and they cannot trust this health minister. In terms of Redland Hospital, let me start by saying that our hospital is staffed by a wonderful team of dedicated medical professionals and support staff. However, they and the long-suffering Redlands community are continually being let down by the Palaszczuk government, the health minister and local Labor MPs who are just not delivering.

One of the biggest needs in the Redlands for some time has been a major upgrade of Redland Hospital. Sadly, over five successive budgets all Labor has managed to achieve is a repeat of the master plan completed by the LNP, the start of a business case for an upgrade and a few small items. Residents are getting tired of the fancy signs, photo shoots and reannouncements. Some 150,000 Redland locals want their fair share of the Health budget. They want to see real results delivered sooner rather than many years down the track. Our region is growing rapidly. First-class health facilities are a priority and it is time for the minister to stop playing games. Nothing less than a major upgrade of our local hospital will do.

Why does the Palaszczuk Labor government have to be dragged kicking and screaming into investing in the health of Redland residents? Why are people being treated like second-class citizens? Camouflaging maintenance funding as projects and doing a play on words does not cut it anymore. Speaking of cuts, the IHPA figures for Metro South hospitals, including Redland Hospital, show the state has cut funding to the hospitals over the last two financial years while federal funding has increased. Labor's cuts to health reveal the incompetence of this health minister and he must go.

In terms of ambulance ramping, Redland Hospital has long been high on the list when it comes to ambulance ramping. It is a huge concern during the winter months when many of our elderly citizens suffer serious medical conditions. In terms of patient care, the situation at Redland Hospital was so dire over one weekend last month that six mental health patients were being held in the emergency department because there were no beds available in the mental health unit. It gets worse. There were no mental health beds available at any of the hospitals in the region. Transferring patients was not an option and staff had no other option but to keep them in the emergency department—yes, the emergency department and in fact the interview room of the emergency department. If the minister was really doing his job, this would not have occurred. Emergency departments are specialised areas for emergency situations like heart attacks, traffic accidents, falls and broken bones and other unexpected traumas.

Let me share with the House a recent ED experience of one of my constituents. She was taken to Redland Hospital emergency department by a member of the Redlands mental health acute care team. Her family was advised that she would have to remain in the emergency ward for the weekend and possibly longer due to the unavailability of beds in the hospital's mental health unit. Staff

acknowledged that this was a completely unsatisfactory situation and a terrible way to treat a very sick person who was already confused and traumatised. However, there was nothing more they could do. This patient was kept in an interview room with a bright fluorescent light shining down on her face. She was also under the guard of three security officers—a situation that made her anxious and agitated. She was afraid of the large uniformed men. The door of the interview room opens directly on to a busy corridor which runs into the busy triage area.

By 8 pm that day, the patient's family was notified that she was no longer in the interview room in the emergency ward and no-one knew where she was. This mental health patient had escaped into the darkness on her own and in a very vulnerable state. Police searched for the patient throughout the night and she was found the following morning some eight kilometres away from the hospital. She was carrying no identification, had not taken her regular medication and was dressed in light clothing and barefoot. She had spent a long, cold night walking alone in a very confused and frightened state. Health minister, our patients deserve better than this. Their families deserve much more. I can only begin to imagine the fear that must have been running through the patient's mind and the minds of her family members that night. This could have been a tragic outcome, but I take this opportunity to thank the police—

**Mr Brown** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Capalaba.

**Dr ROBINSON:**—for all they did on that night and for returning her safely—

**Mr Brown** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The member for Capalaba is warned under the standing orders. Comments will come through the chair.

**Dr ROBINSON:**—the next day. It is glaringly obvious that more needs to be done to address the current shortfalls in our health system. I support the shadow minister's motion. This minister must go!