




Speech By
Meaghan Scanlon

MEMBER FOR GAVEN

Record of Proceedings, 1 May 2019

MOTION

Queensland Health; No Confidence in Minister for Health

 **Ms SCANLON** (Gaven—ALP) (5.27 pm): I rise to speak against the member for Mudgeeraba's motion—a motion which seeks to score cheap political points at the cost of devaluing and undermining the hard work of our front-line service workers. This Palaszczuk government has been standing up for our front-line service workers since day one. We stood up against those opposite and we have stood up against the federal LNP government which has let Queenslanders down every single time.

The Abbott-Turnbull-Morrison government cut \$316 million from Queensland hospitals. I do not remember the member for Mudgeeraba speaking for the motion to condemn Scott Morrison when he locked in those cuts in the latest budget. What I do remember is members of this government on this side demanding that Queenslanders get our fair share for hospital funding. I stood up when the federal government cut \$27.2 million from my local Gold Coast Hospital and Health Service, including Robina Hospital, which is in the member for Mudgeeraba's very own electorate. That funding cut has real-life consequences for patients on the Gold Coast. It could have funded 947 hernia repairs, 398 hip replacements or 2,559 cataract procedures, or 650 people could have had their tonsils removed.

Our hospitals are feeling the pressure, and our ageing and growing population means Queenslanders need access to health services more. Every single dollar that the federal government cut has added to that pressure. Even with that pressure as a result of the federal government's cuts, our front-line service workers have been working incredibly hard. On the Gold Coast, they treated 15,491 patients in March alone—a six per cent increase. Importantly, 100 per cent of our most critically ill patients were seen immediately, within the clinically recommended time. On this side of the chamber we back in our doctors, nurses, paramedics and health practitioners.

During the last sitting week the Premier and Minister for Health both talked about the fact that we had approximately 250 elderly Queenslanders in hospitals waiting for a Commonwealth subsidised aged-care place and approximately 400 people with a disability in Queensland hospitals waiting for an NDIS package. Why did the member for Mudgeeraba not join the government in calling on Scott Morrison to take action and fast-track the placement of these Queenslanders, who should have been in residential aged care or disability services?

The federal electorate of Moncrieff covers parts of both the member for Mudgeeraba's electorate and mine. A statewide audit commissioned by the Queensland Nurses and Midwives' Union found that this electorate had the worst hours of care provided in the state as a result of understaffing. Instead of backing in our hardworking nurses and aged-care staff, the member for Mudgeeraba sold them out, saying that this would be 'just another scare campaign from the QNMU'. That was a particularly embarrassing comment from her given that two days later the Prime Minister announced a royal commission into the aged-care sector. It is interesting also that the member for Mudgeeraba is now quoting lines from United Voice and the QNMU claiming to stand up for their interests, but we all know that those opposite were part of a government that sold out those members. Just last week I heard from nurses and aged-care staff—

Ms Bates interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Stewart): Order! One moment, please. Member for Mudgeeraba, I have given you several warnings now. You are now officially warned under the standing orders.

Ms SCANLON: Just last week I heard from nurses and aged-care staff at a forum that I held, some of whom live in the member for Mudgeeraba's electorate, who are pleading for better staffing levels so that residents who do not need to be in hospital can remain in their home.

I still come across people in my community who remember the savage cuts made under the Newman government. This year I knocked on Carmel's front door, a Pacific Pines resident who was callously sacked under the Newman government at the Gold Coast University Hospital. In stark contrast, in last year's budget we backed in the Gold Coast and brought their hospital and health budget to a record \$1.5 billion a year, a \$34.5 million increase on the previous year. Between March 2015 and September 2018 we hired an additional 193 doctors and 748 nurses. We build up our health services; those opposite tear them down. I oppose the motion.