



Speech By  
**Ros Bates**

**MEMBER FOR MUDGEERABA**

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Record of Proceedings, 1 May 2019

**MOTION**

**Queensland Health; No Confidence in Minister for Health**



**Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (5.00 pm): I move—

That this House:

1. condemns the Palaszczuk Labor government's health crisis for undermining confidence in Queensland's public health system;
2. notes:
  - (a) the recent unprecedented overcrowding crisis which has seen patients turned away and left untreated;
  - (b) that it has taken only four years for Queensland Health to be taken back to the bad old days of dysfunction;
  - (c) doctors have said that Queensland Health is in crisis;
  - (d) the Queensland Nurses and Midwives' Union has said Queensland Health is in crisis;
  - (e) Nambour GP and AMA councillor Dr Wayne Herdy issued a public plea to save one of his patients who was at risk of death;
  - (f) a young mum suffering from endometriosis was kicked out of her bed and discharged, still in excruciating pain;
  - (g) the Australasian College of Emergency Medicine warned about unacceptable and intolerable delays, calling Queensland Health's emergency wait times 'inhumane';
  - (h) the Australian Medical Association Queensland called on the Palaszczuk government to urgently stop the digital hospital IT rollout because patient safety was at risk;
  - (i) the United Voice union has said Labor's rapid offload policy is putting lives at risk; and
  - (j) the sensational sacking of the Labor appointed CEO of Metro South HHS;
3. calls on the Palaszczuk Labor government to implement real-time public reporting every time a 'code yellow' is declared so that sick Queenslanders can have confidence that when they turn up to a hospital there will be a bed; and
4. expresses no confidence in Labor's health minister.

It is time for patient care to come first, and that means fixing Queensland's health crisis under Labor. Our hardworking nurses, doctors, midwives and paramedics are struggling on the front line to improve patient care. They are coping increased assaults and violence in our hospitals at the same time they are trying to provide world-class health care to Queenslanders.

We have had just over four years of failed Labor health policies and what we are seeing now is the result. We have seen a code yellow crisis with major hospitals bursting at the seams; a dump-and-run ambulance ramping policy putting patient care at risk; hundreds of thousands of dollars wasted on changing the name of the Lady Cilento Children's Hospital while sick kids get treated in a hospital kitchenette because of a shortage of oncology beds; and now a CEO scapegoated because the minister does not take responsibility for his own portfolio.

On top of that, we have the ongoing harassment of nurses still being chased from Labor's Health payroll debacle almost a decade after it began. We also see major IT health bungles affecting hospitals right now with the botched rollout of Labor's integrated electronic Medical Record system. A scathing

Auditor-General's report late last year revealed a \$256 million blowout in the program that the minister labelled at the time as a 'big tick'. The AMAQ have called on the IT rollout to be halted until all issues are sorted and patient safety is no longer at risk.

We have also seen the IT rollout dogged by major corruption scandals with the resignation of the former Labor appointed CEO of eHealth Queensland, Dr Richard Ashby, earlier this year, despite calls for his sacking for several months. It has been a series of broken promises, crisis management and political scandals.

When it comes to health, Labor's priorities are all wrong. At the last state election Premier Annastacia Palaszczuk promised better local health services, but things have gone backwards. Queensland Health was described as a basket case under former Labor premier Anna Bligh; it is now bedlam under Annastacia Palaszczuk. Labor's code yellow crisis that Queenslanders saw in late March saw surgeries cancelled and patients warned not to come to hospitals unless it was for a critical emergency. Labor's dump-and-run, rapid off-load ambulance ramping has seen major disputes between paramedics and nursing staff and warnings about patient care.

The minister was warned about the concerns with the policy mid last year by nurses at the QEII hospital which were against normal QAS process with regard to coordination of patient off-loads within the ED. He was also warned that patients had been placed on stretchers against clinical advice and left unattended which they believed was a risk to patient safety. Let us remember that this was supposed to be a policy that was only in place for the Commonwealth Games.

In response to the issues raised in the media when the issue raised its ugly head at the Logan Hospital, United Voice General Secretary Gary Bullock was quoted as saying—

'Paramedics bringing in patients are being stopped by hospital staff at triage and told to take their patients back to their units ramped outside,' ...

'It's simply unacceptable to turn patients away from hospital and back into ambulances. It's putting at risk the lives of Queenslanders in need.'

'Our ambulance officers need to be out in the community, responding to emergencies, not stuck on hospital ramps.'

'As the union for Queensland Ambulance Officers, United Voice demands that the Director General take immediate action to fix this, and the Health Minister take control of Metro South health board.'

'Clearly they haven't got the ability to run the service the community needs—the Minister must step up and take control if the hospital boards can't do it.'

'This is another example of the health crisis failing Queenslanders.'

I table a copy of that article.

*Tabled paper:* Article from the *Courier-Mail*, dated 10 April 2019, titled 'Paramedics clash with Logan Hospital emergency department staff in overcrowding rift' [\[677\]](#).

Queenslanders deserve a world-class public health system that the Palaszczuk government is not delivering. Elective surgery wait times are blowing out. Emergency departments are overcrowded. Ambulance ramping is getting worse. Our public hospitals are literally bursting at the seams. These are not just numbers on a spreadsheet; it is your mother or your son or your close family friend. At the same time we have seen cuts to regional maternity services in the bush.

The current Queensland Health hospital performance data shows that 29 per cent of patients in our EDs are not being seen within clinically recommended time frames; 27 per cent of patients are ramped in ambulances for longer than 30 minutes; and elective surgery wait times are blowing out, with 93.8 per cent of patients seen on time with a median wait time of 40 days compared with 97 per cent at 28 days when the LNP left office. It is simply not good enough. Yesterday we saw the wrong Stephen sacked. It is time for the health minister, Steven Miles, to go.