



Speech By  
**Amanda Camm**


**MEMBER FOR WHITSUNDAY**

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Record of Proceedings, 30 November 2021

**MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST**

**Domestic and Family Violence; Metro North Hospital and Health Service, Investigation**

 **Ms CAMM** (Whitsunday—LNP) (2.25 pm): This afternoon, we learnt of a young Logan mother Mary Benedito, who was murdered, allegedly by her intimate partner, and leaves behind an 11-month-old son. We send our deepest condolences to her family in their time of grief. In this 16 days of activism to end gender based violence against women—and having just recently attended the Premier's white ribbon breakfast—on behalf of all women across this state, this government needs to do more. I am tired of hearing the words of the Attorney-General, 'We must do better.' The Attorney-General, the police minister, the minister for housing, the Minister for Health and the Premier, on behalf of women, we demand more. We are tired of women being murdered at the hands of their intimate partners. These were preventable deaths of women who now are leaving behind children to be raised by their family members.

This government needs to show some accountability, because the buck stops with it. For the Premier's benefit—and clearly she is not across her brief given that she has almost 20 media staff—11 women have come forward since June 2020 with alleged claims of sexual harassment at Metro North Hospital. I stand up today to speak on behalf of those women. Who knows how many more will come forward over the coming weeks as they share their courage and their stories of assault?

The complaints were made against a senior manager. For the Premier's benefit, if she checks the major news outlets she will see the stories of these young women. I refer to the offensive nicknames, to the derogatory naming of women's breasts and to rating the attractiveness of patients and staff. Victims allege that he would play a game of 'root or boot', a judgement of whether or not one would have sex with a person. Another woman stated that on her first day he invited the staff member to the cafe, naming it the 'Rape Dungeon'. When speaking about former staff members, he laughed, 'We broke her.' That woman was 22 years old. This is bizarre behaviour.

There are allegations where he pressured young women to be a part of their social media accounts; where he would interrogate staff after office drinks as to why he was not invited to continue on; and a working culture where one victim says it was just like a kindergarten except the culture was of absolute terror and fear. These women have been failed by Queensland Health and by the cover-up of a toxic culture. These women are furious with the findings of an internal investigation—not an independent investigation.

On 8 November the *Courier-Mail* reported—and the Premier's media team should go and check this—about the victims. One former employee stated that it was appalling and inadequate, that the response from beginning to end says one thing: they have always and will always protect the reputation of the organisation and that they make it so difficult for complainants to come forward—they want women to give up and go away. Queensland Health's response has been one of victim blaming. These women do not feel heard. These women do not feel that there are any consequences for these gross actions.

I believe these women. The opposition believes these women—not one woman, not two women but 11 women. This state government does not want to see it. In fact the Premier was so disrespectful to those women today that she would not even take my question on notice or look into it or say she would get back to me. She was dismissive and instead spent the next three minutes answering a Dorothy Dixier and saying, 'No-one here seems to pay attention to ministerial statements.' This state government pays lip-service to victims. It pays lip-service to women and it takes no action. If the health minister or the Premier do not take action and if he does not go then the minister needs to go. We will not let up until there is accountability. It is very clear that the minister and the Premier have lost touch.

*(Time expired)*