




Speech By
Charis Mullen

MEMBER FOR JORDAN

Record of Proceedings, 16 June 2021

MOTION

Health System

 **Mrs MULLEN** (Jordan—ALP) (5.57 pm): I rise to support the amendment moved by the Minister for Health. I acknowledge the people who are listed in the motion moved by the opposition. Each of these individuals and their families deserve to have their concerns addressed and I trust that the Minister for Health has been provided with those details.

Let us speak further about details and facts. Fact: health systems across Australia are currently feeling incredible impacts resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. Queensland is not unique in this.

Mr Millar interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Pause the clock. Member for Gregory, you are on a warning. You can leave the chamber for an hour.

Whereupon the honourable member for Gregory withdrew from the chamber at 5.57 pm.

Mrs MULLEN: 'A patient suffering a stroke was forced to wait more than 40 minutes for an ambulance last night, while another person with chest pains waited an hour during a critical lack of resources, according to paramedics.' That was reported in South Australia under the Marshall Liberal government. 'An outbreak of COVID-19 in hospitals would have a catastrophic impact on a health system that is already in crisis mode, according to the Australian Medical Association.' That was reported in Tasmania, under the Gutwein Liberal government. 'Emergency departments are clogged with seriously ill patients and paramedics are responding to record numbers of life-threatening cases as doctors warn the after-effects of people delaying medical care due to COVID-19 restrictions are pushing the system to crisis point.' That was reported today in New South Wales under the Berejiklian Liberal government.

Those opposite can come in here and pretend that this is a uniquely Queensland and Labor problem, but they either do not understand what is going on in our country or they are deliberately playing politics with people's distress. Where are they on aged-care beds? Where are they on NDIS packages? We know that there are currently almost 600 people in Queensland public hospital beds who could be better cared for in other settings. What are they saying about this? Where are the calls for the federal Morrison government to step in and provide packages to those who need aged and disability care?

The Queensland public hospital system is not where those people should be. They have been abandoned by the Morrison government, they have nowhere to go and we are looking after them. Our government has not stopped caring for people—

Mr Crandon interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Pause the clock. Member for Coomera, you are on a warning.

Mrs MULLEN: Our government has not stopped caring for the people of this state and we continue to do that each and every day. Only last month the health minister announced a \$100 million funding boost to tackle the unprecedented demand in Queensland's public hospitals. We did not put our heads in the sand. We acted decisively with this funding to create an initial 65 new beds in some of Queensland's busiest hospital and health services. Through this motion the opposition is again misleading Queenslanders by demanding immediate action when immediate action has been taken. Our government's record health budget, which was announced only yesterday, will provide \$22.2 billion to ensure our state's doctors, nurses and emergency response personnel have the best facilities to continue to deliver care.

In my own electorate we will see the best facilities. I am very pleased to speak about the new public hospital in Springfield that we have announced. I want to thank the member for Mudgeeraba for her motion because it also gives me the opportunity to put some facts on the table. I am very proud that our government will be investing in a new public hospital in Greater Springfield. This will be important for those who live not only within the area but also across the greater Ipswich and western Brisbane region. The \$177 million announced in yesterday's budget, working in partnership with the Mater, is significant and it is a commitment that our community has warmly welcomed. It is something that I have advocated for since I was elected in late 2017.

During the 2020 state election, the Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce began a public campaign and petition calling for the new public hospital. I want to thank the chamber for their work on this. It was a funded campaign that included signage, billboards, social media and videos. I am sure that it cost their members significant funds. During a candidate debate with the chamber, the then LNP candidate turned up. It was the first time we had ever seen him on the campaign trail. He announced to the audience that the LNP would be supporting and funding a new public hospital in Springfield. For two weeks, during pre-poll and on election day, LNP volunteers kept telling voters that they were going to deliver the new hospital.

What I thought was most curious was that neither the then leader of the LNP, the member for Nanango, nor the shadow minister for health, the member for Mudgeeraba, turned up to announce what surely was a most significant election commitment for the region. Where were they? Then I saw the actual commitment in a letter provided by the member for Mudgeeraba to the chamber of commerce and shared by some LNP members online. I table that letter because it shows—surprise, surprise—that the LNP were, in fact, not funding the new public hospital. Their commitment if elected was to seek a briefing from Queensland Health. That was it: a briefing. What would I value a briefing at? Perhaps 50 bucks. Maybe 100 bucks if it was a catered affair.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 23 October 2020, from the member for Mudgeeraba, Ms Ros Bates MP, to the President, Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce, Mr Neil Coupland, regarding a new public hospital in Springfield [889](#).

Once again they have misled voters with a fake commitment. It was absolutely shameful. Given the LNP's primary vote of 22 per cent in Jordan, thankfully it was one that the voters in my electorate did not swallow.