



Speech By  
**Christopher Whiting**


**MEMBER FOR BANCROFT**

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**MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST**

**Liberal National Party, Health System**

 **Mr WHITING** (Bancroft—ALP) (2.32 pm): I rise today to continue speaking about the same theme I spoke about last sitting week—that is, the LNP’s continual criticism of our hardworking Queensland Health staff. It is clear that the LNP is going to continue to undermine the work of our Queensland Health staff yet offer nothing but criticism. Let us keep examining their four dot points that they call a plan.

One of the dot points is better resources. The LNP still has not shown us how they would deliver better support or more support to Queensland Health than this government. How are they going to do more than this? We have seen from this government 15,000 new frontline workers since 2015, 9,000 frontline staff in Queensland Health this term, three hospitals, 11 hospital expansions, the new cancer centre, 200 more beds at Caboolture Hospital, 200 more beds at Redcliffe Hospital and Jacaranda Place in Brisbane’s north. The truth is that the LNP could never deliver more resources than Labor. They never could and never will.

One of the other dot points is more control to doctors and nurses. Let us examine this a bit more. I searched for this policy online. I found one that said that they would give more control back to local doctors and nurses through local health boards. That policy is from 2012. Mark McArdle said that before the 2012 election. They have been recycling the same dot point, masquerading as a policy, for 10 years. We know that that 2012 dot point ended disastrously.

We know what happened from 2012 to 2015. The LNP’s stewardship of the health system in that term of government will be remembered for generations as a disaster. Queenslanders know that they alienated doctors and nurses. They sacked 4,400 healthcare staff, including 1,800 nurses and they closed the Barrett centre. They do not believe in allowing our doctors and nurses to be in control. We heard last sitting week that they do not support allowing doctors to make decisions on where they allocate patients in their birthing and obstetric wards. They are recycling a phrase. They have no policy.

Another dot point in their plan that I touched on previously is real-time data. I heard the member for Buderim speaking on ABC Radio during the last week or so. He said, ‘If you can measure it; you cannot manage it.’ It is very clear that Queensland Health staff are measuring it and are managing it. Let us look at what the minister said recently. The number of people getting elective surgery rose in the September quarter. Some 33,000 elective surgery procedures were done in that time, but that was a time when 300,000 staff days were lost due to COVID or illness. On 31 July, 800 Queenslanders were in hospital with COVID. There was a 7.1 per cent increase in ED presentations in that quarter. I love this statistic: 100 per cent of category 1 patients were seen by clinicians within two minutes of presentation to an ED.

The LNP can see how our hardworking staff are managing the system. They can go to [www.performance.health.qld.gov.au](http://www.performance.health.qld.gov.au). The data is there. It shows that we are managing the system and we are managing the system better than they could ever hope to do. I wish they would stop talking down our Queensland Health staff.

The LNP's third dot point, which I have talked about before, is better triage. I still do not know what this dot point means. It concerns me. I think this means kicking people out of our emergency wards. They would say to patients, 'You're not too bad; why don't you go to the private hospital down the road or across on the other corner. Why can't you have this procedure done elsewhere?' This is where they apply their free-market ideology to the healthcare system. We have seen that done time and time again. They have never explained what this dot point means, especially what it means for the staff of Queensland Health.

In conclusion, the LNP offer no policy and no plan. All they offer is a half-baked ideology. Their supposed four-point plan has zero new dollars, zero new staff, zero new beds and zero new ideas. They do not have a plan. All they have is an empty slogan.