




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR WHITSUNDAY

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MOTION

Hospital, Performance

 **Ms CAMM** (Whitsunday—LNP) (6.03 pm): I just heard fear and misinformation being expressed by the member for Mackay. Let me remind the member for Mackay, the broader community and the state of Queensland of the track record of the then assistant minister for health, who oversaw the biggest disaster for women’s health in this state. A review showed that 26 women had received below standard care and had been injured or harmed under this state government’s watch. That was 26 women in Mackay. There were over 170 women in Mackay in obstetrics and gynaecology who came forward. These were women who had their bladders cut, women who had hysterectomies, women who lost their babies. That is the track record of the member for Mackay. That is the track record of this Labor government when it comes to health standards.

We hear lip-service about the care of our frontline staff. That debacle in my community of Mackay has set back our reputation in Mackay a decade in terms of attracting doctors and nurses not to mention creating a culture of cover-up in Mackay. There were nurses who could not come forward and speak up, who were not protected by this government. A former health minister opposite said the LNP was politicking when we were standing up for victims. That is what we do here in the LNP: stand up for regional women and regional women’s rights to give birth, to have a baby where they live. I stand by our track record on regional and rural women’s health more so than I ever would looking at this Labor government’s track record.

I also want to point to some statements that were made about the Big Build, particularly at the Mackay Base Hospital. We have now seen the former health minister and the current health minister fly to Mackay to re-announce, as they do. This statement has come from clinicians who have written to the opposition. It states—

This will be the third maternity unit during my 40 years in Mackay.

...

Once again patronising planning officials come from Brisbane—

with no ministerial oversight—

hold perfunctory consultations with clinical staff then tell us what we need.

...

The women of Mackay are going to be given a quick and easy bottom-shelf, “home brand” product, essentially—

to put a bandaid fix on what has been—

an on-going substandard service for the next generation—

of Mackay mothers and women. It goes on—

With the new unit, women are, at times, still going to wait for days to access emergency surgery for serious clinical problems including miscarriage, pain, bleeding, large abscesses and the like.

Women from the new maternity unit, who will need a caesarean section, are still going to continue to be wheeled through public corridors to reach the current theatre suite.

That is not a first-class system, and the women of Mackay, the Whitsundays and the Central Queensland region deserve better. It goes on—

They are still going to have to compete for theatre time, sometimes for days, with trauma, general surgery, orthopaedics and other disciplines.

That is what happens in a regional and rural community: we have to prioritise. We understand that, but when the government is taking royalties from our region—\$220 million—and investing it in our hospital, we deserve a better standard of care. We deserve our clinicians and our frontline nurses to be listened to, to be heard and not to be talked at. I certainly hope the new health minister goes and asks some questions of the member for Mackay, who was previously the assistant health minister, when it comes to the lack of consultation undertaken.

I turn now to the shadow health minister's motion regarding tier 3 escalations that have been detailed in our question on notice. In Mackay there were 14 escalations, averaging 66 hours. That totals over 900 hours. In Townsville in North Queensland, the tertiary hospital that Mackay residents in desperate need are transported to, there were 13 escalations, averaging 70 hours. That also totals over 920 hours. Right now this government has a facade of releasing and providing access to more data when, in fact, the opposition has uncovered that there is less data. The only thing that we have seen from the new health minister is more Instagram-worthy photos than we have ever seen of any other minister before, and Queenslanders will see through it.