




Speech By
Amanda Camm

MEMBER FOR WHITSUNDAY

Record of Proceedings, 10 October 2023

MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Sexual Assault Services

 **Ms CAMM** (Whitsunday—LNP) (2.28 pm): Last year I stood here and shared with the House the horrific story of a young woman—just like me, just like those opposite—who was out for a social drink. Her night out became her worst nightmare: laying in a ball of pain with not one but two perpetrators' semen inside her, bruised and battered, failed by the Queensland forensic lab. Women across the state are courageously turning up at emergency departments, quietly whispering to a triage nurse, 'I have been raped,' barely comprehending the words and wondering whether she will be believed. She takes a seat and waits, and continues to wait. Finally, hours later, after being told that there is no-one there—no-one there who can help you, no-one there who can carry out a rape kit—she is to go home, covered in the semen of 'him' inside her. She can feel it on her legs, mixed with her own blood from the injuries and her tears. It burns. She is not allowed to shower. She is told to take photos of her injuries. Pulling out her iPhone, every time she looks at that iPhone she does not believe the imagery she sees: is that my body, bruised, bloody? The thought continues to make her sick. It makes me sick. It should make everybody in this House sick reliving the trauma.

It is unacceptable. Queensland women who are victims of sexual assault deserve to be treated with care and compassion; they deserve no less than a first-class service. They also deserve access to timely and best practice treatment, but that has not been happening. That has not been happening in this state for the past eight years. This government has had three terms and still it fails women and victims of sexual assault.

This morning in question time, when we raised how victims were being treated, the health minister said, 'Let me know and I will fix it.' Rape kits have been substandard and trained staff are not adequate—there are not enough and they are not there at the times when women and victims need them. Those opposite have said that we were politicking, that we were playing political games. The commission of inquiry proved that that was wrong. Today in question time the health minister was not across the detail of her own brief when she said that she would fix it. This minister said that there is funding, that there is a commitment, that there is a new standard of rape kits and that there is adequate funding for training. An announcement is not enough. An announcement to victims of rape living with the trauma every day because of the failures of this government is not enough. They present to our hospitals to seek care, to start the journey to seeking justice. It is clear that women in these situations are not only seeing justice delayed but also, in fact, seeing justice denied at the hands and the failings of this Labor government.

Today's performance outlined that the minister is not across the detail. The opposition has heard from whistleblowers. The opposition is aware that senior health bureaucrats know of the failings of sexual assault kits and the inadequate training. The opposition is aware that one of the big four consultancies has undertaken a review and there is a report. If the minister is not fully across the brief, the opposition will continue to call it out. We will continue to speak on behalf of victims. We will continue

to protect whistleblowers and speak on their behalf. We are not politicking; we are representing vulnerable Queenslanders who have lost faith in this government, who have no confidence in a health minister or a Premier or a former attorney-general who stand up every day paying lip-service to protecting Queensland women when all of the actions that we see continue to fail. To those women we say sorry. It is not good enough and we will stand up every day in this House holding ministers and the government to account.