




Speech By
Brent Mickelberg

MEMBER FOR BUDERIM

Record of Proceedings, 30 March 2023

PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Dental Services, Wait Times

 **Mr MICKELBERG** (Buderim—LNP) (2.50 pm): Today, Buderim grandfather Graham visited parliament to fight for the thousands of Queenslanders languishing on the dental health waitlist. I questioned the Premier on his behalf: why does it take representations from MPs for Queensland patients like Graham to get the treatment they deserve?

Graham has been suffering since August last year after all of his bottom teeth were removed. He cannot eat. He is losing weight and he is losing hope. While he was offered an appointment at the end of April, Graham was told he would not have any teeth for at least a year because of the lack of capacity that exists within the Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service.

Graham told me of the impact it has had on his mental health and of the sense of helplessness and frustration as he has spent months unsuccessfully trying to get the help he needs to fix his teeth. In desperation Graham finally came to me this next week to ask for help. After I went in to bat for him, Graham has been advised that he will finally be able to get the help he deserves as Queensland Health is going to pay for a private dentist to deliver the treatment he needs. But why does it take political and media pressure for Queenslanders to get the medical treatment that they deserve from Queensland Health?

Although Graham is going to get the treatment he needs, Graham wants to help the 365 other Sunshine Coast priority 2 dental patients who are all waiting for longer than clinically recommended—some of whom have been waiting for more than a year. Five patients in the member for Gympie's electorate have been waiting for longer than a year. That treatment should have been provided to them within 90 days.

Graham's journey over the last year has been a difficult one so members can imagine Graham's disgust at the Premier's arrogant and dismissive response when I questioned her on his behalf. For the Premier to suggest that it takes political influence for Queenslanders just to get an appointment from Queensland Health is a disgrace. As Graham said, 'What about all the other Queenslanders who are in the same boat as me?'

Ms Grace interjected.

Mr MICKELBERG: I can hear the member for McConnel shouting. Constituents in the member for McConnel's electorate are waiting longer than clinically recommended as well. Across the state there are 2,403 priority 2 dental patients waiting—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Martin): The level of interjection is getting a bit much. I would ask that we all hear the member for Buderim in silence.

Mr MICKELBERG: As Graham said, 'What about all the other Queenslanders who are in the same boat as me?' Across the state there are 2,403 priority 2 dental patients who are waiting longer than clinically recommended for the dental treatment they deserve. Some 562 of those patients have waited for more than a year—more than a year!

Queenslanders deserve better than the arrogant response that we see from the Premier and the Minister for Health every time we go in to bat for Queensland patients. We would not have to come in here and go in to bat for Queensland patients if the hospital system was delivering the health services they deserve and need.

Mrs GERBER: I rise to a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. The member for Logan was interjecting with some unparliamentary language and I ask him to withdraw.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I did not hear anything. Member for Logan, if you used unparliamentary language would you withdraw.

Mr POWER: For the good order of the House, I am happy to withdraw.