




Speech By
Brent Mickelberg

MEMBER FOR BUDERIM

Record of Proceedings, 13 September 2023

MOTION

Hospital, Performance

 **Mr MICKELBERG** (Buderim—LNP) (5.43 pm): If you were listening to those opposite, you would think it was all good—that there were no problems, that there was not a health crisis. I do not think the member for Mundingburra even mentioned patients once—not once. He spoke about the opposition leader a lot and he spoke about money a lot, but he did not talk about patients once. That tells you everything you need to know. Queenslanders are scared. They are scared, and who can blame them? They woke up this morning to the front page of their local newspaper saying that their hospitals were at emergency capacity 150 times in just three months. Queensland hospitals could not cope 150 times in three months, so they have every right to feel scared.

The chaos and the crisis created by this lazy, third-term Labor state government cannot be covered up or watered down. Real-time data must be shared. The light must shine in. Queenslanders deserve to know how their local hospital is performing. They deserve to know that in their hour of need there will be a hospital bed for them when they need it. The previous health minister was given the heave-ho in an attempt to hoodwink Queenslanders into thinking there was change on the horizon and that this tired, third-term Labor state government were going to take this problem seriously. Despite the fly-in fly-out photo opportunities and despite the shiny new performance website that has even less performance data than its predecessors, nothing has changed. The spin might have improved but health outcomes have not.

Queenslanders deserve more respect than what is on offer by the new Minister for Health. Queenslanders can see through the spin. Even the most optimistic Queenslander could not have hidden their dismay in finding out that the new health minister is even more secretive than the last. I notice the new health minister came in here and said that GPs were to blame for the problems in the health system in Queensland. Let us look at some facts. The *Medical Journal of Australia* on 7 August published a review about this issue and they said that non-urgent patients are not the cause of overcrowding in emergency departments. They said that more than three-quarters of patients deemed suitable for GP care by Australian Institute of Health and Welfare criteria were unsuitable. They said that a clear and undisputed cause is a lack of inpatient bed capacity. It is a problem of this state government's making because they have not built the hospitals that Queenslanders deserve and that Queenslanders need.

I join with my colleagues in condemning the health minister for releasing less information than her predecessor—less information about code yellows in Queensland hospitals. Queenslanders need to know and they deserve to know when their local hospital is busting at the seams. They deserve to know when it is busting at the seams—not three months later—when it is at maximum capacity, when every bed is taken and when patients are ramped in ambulances. That is exactly the situation that is happening right across the state now. We have got tier 3 escalations, code yellows, right across the state—in Mackay, Townsville, Caboolture, Gold Coast, Robina, Hervey Bay and Bundaberg, just to name a few.

I feel for the people of Rockhampton and the Capricorn Coast most. Rockhampton Hospital has been escalated to emergency capacity 15 times in three months—I repeat: 15 times in three months. How many times did the member for Rockhampton mention that in his contribution or the member for Keppel? Zero. How can the residents of Rockhampton, Yeppoon, Emu Park and Gracemere rely on their local hospital to help them when the worst happens? There is 55 per cent ambulance ramping at Rockhampton Hospital. What are the Labor members for Rockhampton and Keppel doing to fix things? Nothing.

I have been spending a fair bit of time in Rockhampton recently, and in Yeppoon, Gracemere and Emu Park, and everyone says the same thing. They want state members who will fight for their community, state members who will take the fight up to Brisbane if they need to, state members who will fight on crime, health and housing. The people of Central Queensland deserve a state member with the character and the capacity of Nigel Hutton—our LNP candidate for Keppel, a councillor, a father, a teacher—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Pause the clock. Member, I bring you back to the substance of the motion.

Mr MICKELBERG: Queenslanders deserve better. The LNP has committed to releasing health data in real time within 100 days of forming government. People like Nigel Hutton know that is the answer. They know that hiding data does not help. They know that the state government is not serious about addressing this problem. They know that people like the member for Keppel and the member for Rockhampton are beholden to their Labor masters and ministers down here in Brisbane. They know that they will not fight for their communities. They know that when code yellow and tier 3 hits the Rockhampton Hospital the member for Keppel and the member for Rockhampton are not on the phone saying, 'Minister, what are you doing to fix this?' There is nothing. There is radio silence from those opposite because they do not care, and Queenslanders deserve better.