




Speech By
Ros Bates

MEMBER FOR MUDGEERABA

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PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Metro North Health, Injured Patient Compensation

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (2.06 pm): I rise to address reporting today in relation to the Caboolture Hospital. There has been no shortage of issues at the Caboolture Hospital over the past two years, and the opposition has consistently raised them on behalf of brave whistleblowers and patients. These Queenslanders are not making up stories. This is real. This is legitimate.

I want to talk about Kaitlin Bruce whose story was reported today. Kaitlin has suffered ongoing complications after a caesarean section to deliver her beautiful baby boy. After suffering for years, Kaitlin required a hysterectomy. Tragically, Kaitlin will not have children again. Despite suffering these life-changing complications, Kaitlin was offered just \$6,000. She has never gone public until today. Her life has been turned upside down. Her story is harrowing.

How did we get to a point where the level of compensation a patient is afforded is based on whether they are willing to bear their deeply personal story publicly? That is wrong. To those courageous patients who have shared their experiences, like Brittany McDaniel, you are incredibly brave. To Kaitlin Bruce, so are you. Neither of them should have to do what they have done to be appropriately compensated. Compensation should be based on the recognition of someone's loss, suffering or injury. It should not be based on how much damage media reports cause to the curated political image of the Minister for Health. That is disgusting, that is reprehensible, but that appears to have happened.

The health minister now has some very serious questions to answer. How at the same hospital could there be such a huge discrepancy between what two women were afforded in compensation? One got \$6,000; the other got hundreds of thousands—why? How is that allowed to happen? What involvement did the minister or her office have in all of this? We know that on the same day the LNP held its town hall meeting at the Caboolture Hospital a phone call was made by the minister's chief of staff to the McDaniel family. That call aired publicly on the news, a source of great embarrassment to the minister, no doubt. That same evening, allegedly only a matter of hours after the call with the minister's chief of staff, we understand an offer of compensation was made to the McDaniel family, an offer allegedly in the order of hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Any sensible person would reasonably conclude these events which transpired were not a coincidence. Who was involved? Was due process followed? Were protocols in awarding compensation breached? Was this done in a hurry without the right checks and balances to try to quash a political headache for the minister? Was the level of compensation altered because it was aired in the media? The minister should answer these questions in this House here today. Something is not right about this.

To Kaitlin, Brittany and anyone else who has been wronged, you deserve appropriate compensation. But all Queenslanders should know this: it should not be based on how much political damage has been done to the minister's reputation.

(Time expired)