




Speech By  
**Hon. Yvette D'Ath**

**MEMBER FOR REDCLIFFE**

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Record of Proceedings, 22 February 2023

**MOTION: QUEENSLAND HEALTH**

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Minister for Health and Ambulance Services) (5.03 pm): I move the following amendment—

That all words after 'continuing' be omitted and the following inserted:

'pressures on health systems across Australia, and

- (a) notes the growth in hospital demand over the last eight years and supports the Palaszczuk government's \$9.7 billion—

**Mrs Frecklington** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Pause the clock. I am going to hear this motion in silence. Anybody else who wants to interject will be warned.

**Mrs D'ATH:** I continue—

Queensland Health and Hospitals Plan to deliver an additional 2,509 beds;

- (b) notes the need to deliver care closer to home, and supports the Satellite Hospitals Program;
- (c) notes the pressures on primary care arising from the former coalition government's extended Medicare rebate freeze;
- (d) supports efforts to expand access to primary care, such as the North Queensland Community Pharmacy Scope of Practice Pilot;
- (e) supports the Palaszczuk government's commitment to deliver an additional 9,475 frontline workers this term of government;
- (f) notes the challenges caused by workforce shortages, including specialists, that have impacted services such as maternity services—

**Mr Crisafulli** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Leader of the Opposition, you are warned.

**Mrs D'ATH:** I continue—

and the ongoing efforts of the Palaszczuk government to address these issues;

- (g) notes the most recent Queensland Health and Commonwealth performance data showing improved health performance and Queensland's favourable national performance;
- (h) supports all state and territory governments in their ongoing, bipartisan work with the Commonwealth government to reform hospital funding that will ensure all Australians have access to sustainable, free public health care; and
- (i) commends the Palaszczuk government on the record \$23.6 billion investment in Queensland's health system in the 2022-23 budget.'

In speaking to this motion and in responding to the shadow health minister's contribution, I say that what we have here in Queensland is an opposition that has absolutely no idea; an opposition that wants to override clinical advice and ignores information already in the public domain for Gladstone,

Chinchilla and Biloela hospitals; an opposition that calls for bypass to be permanently ruled out, a proposal that is clinically the worst option when staff shortages exist, places patients at extreme risk and is not supported by the Department of Health; an opposition that now wants to talk about federal funding reform a year after all state and territory health ministers started raising this with the former minister Greg Hunt; an opposition that does not want to recognise that the only meaningful progress on health funding reform has occurred with the election of the Labor Albanese government; an opposition that has never publicly come out and supported the North Queensland community pharmacy scope of practice pilot, putting them out of sync with their colleagues in New South Wales; an opposition that has not committed to a single additional bed or single additional healthcare worker, unlike the \$9.7 billion Queensland Health and Hospitals Plan—a real plan, not talking points on a napkin; and an opposition that has no idea when it comes to the performance of the Queensland health system.

I have seen the social media posts from the shadow health spokesperson. My question is this: when is she going to just say thank you for the great work that our health workers are doing every day? It is like the Leader of the Opposition saying, 'I'm not going to oppose for opposition's sake. I'm not going to be negative when there's some good message out there.' When there is a good performance report what do they do? They put out rubbish saying we are failing Queenslanders and they are being left behind. What they are doing is criticising the health services and the performance of our health workers. That is what they are doing. They are ignoring the fact that Queensland has the second best emergency department seen in time performance in the country—I repeat: second best in the country. We are the best performing when it came to seeing elective surgery patients within the clinically recommended time frames—I repeat: best in the country.

Queensland is outperforming New South Wales and Victoria on ambulance response times. When it comes to the elective surgery, the AMA says that addressing the elective surgery backlog also demonstrates that Queensland is ahead of the pack when it comes to elective surgery performance. While we account for approximately 20 per cent of Australia's population, we only account for 10 per cent of the elective surgery backlog. The AMA said that.

When is the shadow health minister going to acknowledge the clinical work of our health workers and the improvement in their performance over the last quarter instead of putting a negative spin on everything because she believes they are all duds. We have heard her say it in this chamber.

*(Time expired)*