



Speech By  
**Dr Christian Rowan**


**MEMBER FOR MOGGILL**

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Record of Proceedings, 27 August 2025

**MOTION**

**Chief Health Officer, Appointment**

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (5.55 pm): I rise to address the amended motion, as moved by the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services. There is no-one more qualified in this House to speak about the role of Chief Health Officer than I, and this is based on my clinical and professional background, and the roles and the experiences—

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! We will go back to the member for Moggill, please.

**Dr ROWAN:** I know the member for Surfers Paradise might try to claim that mantle. The role of Chief Health Officer is one that requires experience, dedication, stability and a vision for public health, which encompasses not only communicable diseases but also non-communicable diseases. It also requires broad experience in both hospital-based settings and primary care and a detailed understanding of bureaucracy.

The role of Chief Health Officer also entails supporting public health relevant to disaster coordination, emergency response and emergency preparedness activities for Queensland, as well as responding to communicable diseases and other health threats. It is also well known that the position has responsibility for leading health information campaigns and being the public face of such campaigns to address issues related to chronic diseases and emergent health trends in order to reduce the future impacts on the state's health system and to raise awareness about issues related to personal responsibility for health outcomes.

Health is one of the most fundamental responsibilities of any state government. It is a responsibility that governments must be held accountable for. The people of Queensland expect that when they are unwell, when they or their family members are in need or when emergencies arise they will be able to access world-class health care without delay, yet for a decade Queenslanders were let down by a state Labor government that was not focused on the fundamentals.

The truth is the former Labor state government presided over a health system in decline. Ambulance ramping hit record levels, with paramedics forced to wait hours to off-load patients instead of being back on the road saving lives. Under Labor, over 60,000 Queenslanders were waiting for elective surgery and more than 280,000 were waiting to see specialists. These were not just numbers; they were families in distress and patients in pain, and the frontline staff were struggling with a system under significant strain. The members opposite have now fallen quiet because they know their record in health is one of complete and utter failure. They failed patients, they failed clinicians—they failed them all. They led to terrible—

**Ms Grace:** No, you had a waiting list for the waiting list. We remember.

**Ms Boyd** interjected.

**Dr ROWAN:** I hear the members for McConnel and Pine Rivers interjecting, but they know their record was one of failure when it came to not only patients here in Queensland but also health clinicians. Health clinicians told us all the time about the disastrous situation in Queensland under the former Labor government.

Labor spent 10 years ignoring the voices of patients and clinicians. They promised hospital capital expansions, but they knew they could not deliver that infrastructure. They announced projects without planning, without budgets or without comprehensively listening to experts.

The independent Sangster review confirmed what many already knew: that Labor's so-called hospital expansion plan was 'an exercise in futility'. That is what was said about their plan. Not one of Labor's projects was deliverable within the proposed timeframe or budget. That was not just incompetence; it was negligence, and Labor were held to account for that at the last state election.

We see the sheer hypocrisy of those opposite. They parade themselves as being champions of accountability, transparency and openness, but, if we look at scandal after scandal of the former Labor government, they failed to do those things here in Queensland. They forget about their own track record in terms of what they failed to deliver for patients here in Queensland.

The current government in Queensland is being accountable, and that is why the contrast could not be any clearer. After 10 years of Labor decline, the government here in Queensland is delivering in just 10 months. We are backing our words with record investment, real reform and visible results. We have a billion dollar commitment over four years when it comes to surgery—the largest in Queensland's history. Already, the elective surgery waitlist has seen the biggest drop since 2015 off the back of our \$100 million Surgery Connect Surge program announced in February. In the year ahead, this will deliver 30,000 surgeries, stabilising and then reducing the waitlists that Labor allowed to spiral.

The LNP government here in Queensland will continue to tackle the challenges left by the former Labor government—record ambulance ramping and record surgical waitlists. I certainly commend the amendment to the motion moved by the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services.

*(Time expired)*