




Speech By
Hon. Tim Nicholls

MEMBER FOR CLAYFIELD

Record of Proceedings, 26 August 2025

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Health System

 **Hon. TJ NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (Minister for Health and Ambulance Services) (10.10 am): It is no secret that ambulance ramping at our hospitals deteriorated under the 10 years of decline of those opposite. Ramping performance is not just a number; it is people waiting too long to receive care, often in critical situations. The member for Waterford promised to reduce ramping to 28 per cent within 12 months of becoming health minister, and that promise was of course broken. The health system continues to suffer from Labor's broken promises.

We can expect today that Labor will try to distract from their decade of decline. If I get any questions today from those opposite—and I say 'if' because in four hours of estimates I did not get one question, so that would be a bonus—I imagine it will be about the Chief Health Officer appointment. What a surprise that might be. Labor have been trying to distract for weeks in relation to the Chief Health Officer recruitment process. They are trying their hardest, selling their little stories, trying to get a story up. Let me be very clear, in words that even those opposite can understand: the appointment of the Chief Health Officer is not considered by the cabinet.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr NICHOLLS: I know that comes as a surprise to them, as they dipped their fingers into every aspect of life, but we are prepared to allow our departments to operate.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr Bailey: Drowning, not waving.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Miller, I just called for order.

Mr NICHOLLS: I take that interjection from the member for Miller. There was not one question from the member for Miller in four hours of estimates—not one. He is the most well resourced, laziest shadow health minister I have ever seen in this place.

Mr BAILEY: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I obviously take personal offence and ask the minister to withdraw.

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, the member has taken personal offence, and I would encourage you to come back to your policy statement, please.

Mr NICHOLLS: I withdraw. We know that there is no overnight fix to Labor's health crisis created over a decade of decline, and that is why we committed to reduce ambulance ramping below 30 per cent by 2028. Meeting this target will be a challenge—as we weather flu seasons; as Queensland's population grows; as federal Labor dithers on the National Health Reform Agreement, on GP payments and on providing aged-care homes; and as demand increases on our hospitals—but it is a challenge we are prepared to overcome.

After 10 years of Labor decline, we are already seeing positive results in just 10 months. Ramping at Bundaberg Hospital has improved by more than five percentage points over the past year, the rate at Hervey Bay Hospital has improved by almost seven percentage points, and in Central Queensland, where we have freed up another 10 beds, Rockhampton Hospital has seen ramping improve by over five percentage points. While there is a long way to go, these results clearly demonstrate the Crisafulli government's commitment to ensuring patients are seen sooner. It also means our hardworking paramedics are returning to the roads sooner. These green shoots are not by chance; they are thanks to the dedication of our frontline clinicians and the Crisafulli government's record \$33.1 billion investment in the health system. This includes building new and upgrading existing transit lounges.

Earlier this month I visited Ipswich Hospital to announce a new, almost \$10 million transit care centre that will double the capacity of the existing transit lounge when it is complete in June next year. When I was speaking to the executive director there, she said, 'This is an idea we have been talking about for over two years'—that was ignored by the previous government. We are funding it and implementing it right now. It is part of our \$55 million Patient Flow Rapid Response Fund. We are also investing a billion dollars in the Queensland Ambulance Service, a nation-leading \$1.75 billion in Surgery Connect and \$18.5 billion in our statewide Hospital Rescue Plan. There is a significant job but, after 10 years of decline under Labor, in 10 months the LNP Crisafulli government is getting on with the job.