

RESIDENTIAL EATING DISORDER TREATMENT FACILITY

Standing Orders Suspension — Motion

MS L. METTAM (Vasse — Leader of the Liberal Party) [12.15 pm] — without notice: I move —

That so much of standing orders be suspended as is necessary to enable the following motion to be moved forthwith —

That this house —

- (1) censures the Minister for Health for misleading the house in her statement after question time yesterday in relation to the *Four Corners* story of 27 February and the federal government’s commitment to eating disorders facilities; and
- (2) calls on the minister to correct the record.

Standing Orders Suspension — Amendment to Motion

On motion by **Mr D.A. Templeman (Leader of the House)**, resolved —

To insert after “forthwith” —

, subject to the debate being limited to 10 minutes for government members and 10 minutes for non-government members

Standing Orders Suspension — Motion, as Amended

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms A.E. Kent): As this is a motion without notice to suspend standing orders, it will need an absolute majority in order to succeed. If I hear a dissentient voice, I will be required to divide the Assembly.

Question put and passed with an absolute majority.

Motion

MS L. METTAM (Vasse — Leader of the Liberal Party) [12.16 pm]: I move the motion. I thank the government for supporting the very important motion to suspend standing orders. I also thank government members for listening to the debate on this motion.

After question time yesterday, the Minister for Health made a statement to the house. Given that it is the uncorrected *Hansard*, I will use my notes of what I heard the minister say. The minister rose under standing order 82A to provide factual information about a question that I had asked about residential eating disorder treatment facilities, the former federal government’s commitment and the *Four Corners* program. The minister stated that the former federal coalition government provided \$56 million to Queensland to build an eating disorders centre, and that the *Four Corners* story of 27 February did not mention Western Australia or the Peel facility and was primarily focused on Queensland. The Minister for Health stated also that the question that had been directed to her was focused on the Queensland facility. That is simply not the case. Although the minister had stated that that was fact and was making an attempt to correct the record, given what I was asking in the question, that was simply not the case.

I would like to table for the benefit of members of this house a transcript of the *Four Corners* episode of 27 February 2023, called “Fading Away”. I seek leave to do that.

[The paper was tabled for the information of members.]

Ms L. METTAM: As members would note from the transcript, the episode deals with the significant issues that are felt right across the country, state by state, and the significant unpreparedness of states to eating disorder challenges that are experienced by around a million people across the country. Mark Butler, the federal health minister, states —

I think crisis is the only word you can use. I think right through the system whether it’s in primary care in the hospital system or residential treatment, we clearly need more capacity in the system. That was apparent before the pandemic, and it’s become even more apparent during the pandemic.

...

Well, I think state health ministers and state treasurers realise without me having to tell them that this is a very serious pressure on their system and they need to respond to it. But they know that. We’ve talked about —

The journalist asks a further question —

The former government allocated \$56 million to build six more residential centres—like Wandi in Queensland—as part of a national strategy. But none of them are even close to opening.

Ms Libby Mettam; Mr David Templeman; Acting Speaker; Mr Shane Love; Amber-Jade Sanderson; Mr John Carey

Mark Butler responds by saying —

I think it is time that we got some clearer commitments about when those centres would be completed. Which is why I've written to health ministers to try to get some clarity around that.

That is what the opposition was seeking—some clarity on the letter that the federal health minister stated he had written to the state ministers on this issue. The former government is flagged in that transcript and in countless media comments—the \$56 million commitment was not for the Queensland facility, as the minister attempted to suggest, but for six residential facilities across the country. It is important the record is corrected. To go to such an extraordinary effort to try to counter an assumption I made in a question, it is important to get these facts straight. The minister has a team of 17 staff who are all geared up for this purpose. We need some clarity around this. There have been countless media reports on this issue. I am sure the minister is aware of the matter. Kimberley Caines' article on 2 November states that every other jurisdiction has made progress by choosing a site, drawing up designs and consulting with the Butterfly Foundation for the correct model of care. Kevin Barrow from the Butterfly Foundation said that the foundation was contracted to give advice but had not yet been contacted by WA around that; he would very much like to see the plans for the site. Media statements by Andrew Wallace, MP, point to the Queensland facility and the \$6 million federal government commitment—significantly less than what the minister suggested.

It is an episode worth viewing. It is vitally important that the minister does not mislead the house on these issues. The opposition raised these issues because they are important. The federal health minister deemed it so important that he stated in the *Four Corners* episode that he wrote to all health ministers in the country. We heard the Minister for Health last year mislead the house about the supernumerary team at Perth Children's Hospital, an important recommendation—whether on purpose or whether as a result of not being properly briefed or not being across her portfolio. We also heard the minister state in answer to a question by the member for Cottesloe about the Australian Medical Association's report into emergency departments that somehow the AMA's data was incorrect. I have been advised by the AMA that it stands by its data of seven out of eight or seven out of 10—it is still the worst performing emergency department.

Ms A. Sanderson: Which one is it?

Ms L. METTAM: It is the same thing, minister. We were being generous by saying seven out of 10. It is also seven out of eight, if the minister wants to make it sound even worse.

Several members interjected.

Ms L. METTAM: It is clear that the minister needs to correct the record when she gets things wrong. It is very important.

Mr P. Papalia: There's an idea. Why don't you try that?

Ms L. METTAM: I am very comfortable with the facts, minister. We have an MPI later about the minister's spin —
Point of Order

Mr R.S. LOVE: The member for Vasse is on her feet. She has only 10 minutes. These people will have an opportunity to respond later.

Several members interjected.

Mr J.N. Carey: "These people"?

Mr R.S. LOVE: These ministers over there. Are you not people? You are ministers. You could act like people. These people, ministers, members—whatever you want to call them—should be silent so the member for Vasse can continue her contribution.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: The member has not referred to a standing order.

Mr R.S. Love: I do not have to under standing orders.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms A.E. Kent): The point of order is not upheld. Leader of the Liberal Party, please continue.

Debate Resumed

Ms L. METTAM: It is important that the record on this is corrected. In August last year the minister made a false suggestion that I somehow was involved in the breaching or sharing of data in the Department of Health data breach in relation to monkeypox, which is completely untrue. It is important that when arguments are raised, and countered in this place, they are done on the basis of information that is fact and that when ministers get things wrong, that they also correct the record. I look forward to the minister's response.

Ms Libby Mettam; Mr David Templeman; Acting Speaker; Mr Shane Love; Amber-Jade Sanderson; Mr John Carey

MS A. SANDERSON (Morley — Minister for Health) [12.27 pm]: I rise to respond to this motion, which the government will not be supporting. I will outline why it is so fundamentally wrong later in my contribution. I will start by addressing the issue of the \$56 million for the eating disorder program.

The *Four Corners* transcript, tabled by the Leader of the Liberal Party, the member for Vasse, outlines a \$56 million contribution for centres such as the one in Queensland. I acknowledge that that is the entirety of the contribution. In fact, the journalist and the *Four Corners* transcript are incorrect because in 2019, Greg Hunt announced \$63 million to fund six residential eating disorder centres. Even if it is at \$56 million and if that is divided by six, that is \$9.3 million—and \$4 million is a fraction of that. Western Australia got a fraction of that. If it is \$63 million, it is \$10.5 million and Western Australia received \$4 million. Four million dollars from \$63 million—if you divide that by six it is \$10 million. The only thing that Andrew Hastie managed to squeeze out of the federal government is \$4 million.

Point of Order

Ms L. METTAM: The minister is not addressing the substance of the suspension motion.

Several members interjected.

A government member: You wanted to talk about monkeypox.

Ms L. METTAM: Yes, which is truth.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms A.E. Kent): The minister has the call.

Debate Resumed

Ms A. SANDERSON: That contribution would not have even covered the extension of the car park at Joondalup Health Campus. I am happy to debate the substance of that at any time, and I am happy to correct the record if I make a mistake; I am not afraid to do that and I have done that. But I do not appreciate the conflation and misleading information that is constantly peddled by the member for Vasse, Leader of the Liberal Party. The state government has made a commitment to contribute \$31 million towards a community-based outreach, statewide eating disorder service. It also bargained hard in the national mental health bilateral last year before the federal election was called and got another \$8.5 million. We were the only state to get more money out of the federal government to be rolled into our statewide eating disorder service. That was supported by the then Minister for Health and Aged Care, Greg Hunt, because he acknowledged and understood that our statewide community-based outreach service is a better model of care.

Let us look at this \$4 million that has been tacked on by the federal member for Canning, Andrew Hastie, which is supposed to go to the redevelopment of the Peel Health Campus. It is not best practice to have recovery facilities in hospitals, full stop, and that is why we do not support that commitment. We want to support people in their communities. The Peel Health Campus redevelopment will cost \$152 million, with a \$25 million contribution from the federal government. It will include 63 additional inpatient periods, 12 chemotherapy places, 20 mental health inpatient beds, an additional operating theatre, 15 palliative care hospice beds, more outpatient services, a new imaging services building and a 10-bed mental health emergency centre. The member for Canning thought that to tack a \$4 million contribution on the end of that was appropriate. It is not appropriate. The other issue is that that facility should not be on a health campus. This contribution will not deliver meaningful change and support for those families.

There is no question that this is one of the most difficult mental health issues that families have to deal with. It is a national crisis; I do not resile from that at all. It is challenging, it is complex and it is something that we need to invest in as a government. That is what we are doing with a \$31 million commitment, plus another \$8.5 million from the federal government to help deliver that commitment. The Minister for Health and Aged Care wrote to me about the \$25 million commitment to Peel Health Campus, including the \$4 million eating disorder facility, but even better, we have met multiple times since and we continue to talk on the phone regularly because we have a good working relationship.

Let us talk about truth, facts and honesty. The Leader of the Liberal Party is not afraid to peddle mistruths inside and outside this chamber. I do not walk away from comments that I have made previously about that. I remind the chamber and the member again about that terrible incident in which a palliative care patient was claimed to have been sent to the morgue alive. The Leader of the Liberal Party was in front of a camera within two hours of that happening, claiming that somehow there was an alleged cover-up at Rockingham General Hospital and making outrageous statements. She said that it was “deeply disturbing”, it “reeks of cover-up” and “points to a health system, which is under extraordinary pressure”. She also made some claims that a doctor had been directed to change the birth certificate. The Corruption and Crime Commission investigated those findings and stated —

The investigation did not substantiate the allegation. The Commission will therefore take no further action.

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The Leader of the Liberal Party does not give anyone, including healthcare workers, the opportunity to furnish her with the facts. Let us not forget that gentleman, Mr Darshan Arora, whose clinical details of his personal experience at Fiona Stanley Hospital were disclosed by a “self-appointed family spokesperson”. Again, the member for Vasse was ready to jump on that and put herself in front of a camera, but it was completely untrue.

In terms of the *Four Corners* program and the statement that I made yesterday, I have corrected the record around that funding allocation, but that still highlights how short-changed WA was from that commitment. I will read from the uncorrected *Hansard* the question asked of me yesterday by the Leader of the Liberal Party —

I refer to the *Four Corners* program aired last month that detailed how underprepared Western Australia’s health system is to deal with eating disorders and that the former coalition federal government committed funding for a WA residential eating disorder centre ...

At no point did the journalist ask the question of the Minister for Health about Western Australia, and at no point was Western Australia’s health system or WA referenced; it is completely untrue. That is why I am going to move an amendment to this motion because it is clear that it is the Leader of the Liberal Party who regularly misleads this house.

Amendment to Motion

Ms A. SANDERSON: I move —

That all words after “house” be deleted, and the following words be inserted —

condemns the Leader of the Liberal Party for misleading the house by stating a *Four Corners* program that aired this month was about Western Australia’s health system and the member’s shameless propensity to make misleading, untrue and false statements

MR J.N. CAREY (Perth — Minister for Housing) [12.35 pm]: With three minutes to spare, I want to say that we have it on the record from the Leader of the Liberal Party that it is so important to get these facts right, and that we have to correct the record. Yet, the Leader of the Liberal Party has made repeated mistakes, either deliberate or due to being mis-briefed, and has not corrected the record. Already we remember the mistake about the rough sleeping numbers in the city. A column piece was written in which the member said there were 1 000 rough sleepers in the city. She said that she tried to correct it, but it was never corrected. The member for Vasse said just then that it is important to get the facts right and that the record needs to be corrected, but she never corrected that.

Mark 2: the member tweeted about rents going up by 135 per cent. I find that fascinating because anyone seeing that tweet would believe that it had gone up by 135 per cent under the McGowan government. She failed to say that that was a 135 per cent increase since 2000. It covers the previous government’s two and a half terms of government. This is deliberate misleading by the Liberal Party and by the member for Vasse.

Last week in this house, the member for Roe claimed that a house was vacant in his electorate. Wrong! False! The tenant had gone away to visit and support his daughter while she was ill. The member came in here and said that that house was vacant. Wrong! This opposition has repeatedly attempted to distort, deceive and mislead.

Hon Steve Martin made false claims about vacancy housing numbers. On radio last August, he said that they had doubled. That was false, incorrect and proven to be so by parliamentary answers.

Division

Amendment (deletion of words) put and a division taken, the Acting Speaker (Ms A.E. Kent) casting her vote with the ayes, with the following result —

Ayes (46)

Mr S.N. Aubrey	Ms J.L. Hanns	Mr S.A. Millman	Ms R.S. Stephens
Mr G. Baker	Mr T.J. Healy	Mr Y. Mubarakai	Ms J.M.C. Stojkovski
Ms L.L. Baker	Mr M. Hughes	Mrs L.M. O’Malley	Dr K. Stratton
Dr A.D. Buti	Mr W.J. Johnston	Mr P. Papalia	Mr C.J. Tallentire
Mr J.N. Carey	Mr H.T. Jones	Mr S.J. Price	Mr D.A. Templeman
Mrs R.M.J. Clarke	Mr D.J. Kelly	Mr D.T. Punch	Mr P.C. Tinley
Ms C.M. Collins	Ms A.E. Kent	Mr J.R. Quigley	Ms C.M. Tonkin
Mr R.H. Cook	Dr J. Krishnan	Ms M.M. Quirk	Mr R.R. Whitby
Ms L. Dalton	Mr P. Lilburne	Ms R. Saffioti	Ms S.E. Winton
Ms K.E. Giddens	Mr M. McGowan	Ms A. Sanderson	Ms C.M. Rowe (<i>Teller</i>)
Ms E.L. Hamilton	Ms S.F. McGurk	Mr D.A.E. Scaife	
Ms M.J. Hammat	Mr D.R. Michael	Ms J.J. Shaw	

Extract from *Hansard*
[ASSEMBLY — Thursday, 30 March 2023]
p1774b-1778a

Ms Libby Mettam; Mr David Templeman; Acting Speaker; Mr Shane Love; Amber-Jade Sanderson; Mr John Carey

Noes (5)

Dr D.J. Honey
Mr R.S. Love

Ms L. Mettam
Mr P.J. Rundle

Ms M. Beard (*Teller*)

Pair

Ms H.M. Beazley

Ms M.J. Davies

Amendment thus passed.

Amendment (insertion of words) put and passed.

Motion, as Amended

The ACTING SPEAKER: The question now is that the motion, as amended, be agreed to.

Division

Question put and a division taken, the Acting Speaker (Ms A.E. Kent) casting her vote with the ayes, with the following result —

Ayes (45)

Mr S.N. Aubrey
Mr G. Baker
Ms L.L. Baker
Dr A.D. Buti
Mrs R.M.J. Clarke
Ms C.M. Collins
Mr R.H. Cook
Ms L. Dalton
Ms K.E. Giddens
Ms E.L. Hamilton
Ms M.J. Hammat
Ms J.L. Hanns

Mr T.J. Healy
Mr M. Hughes
Mr W.J. Johnston
Mr H.T. Jones
Mr D.J. Kelly
Ms A.E. Kent
Dr J. Krishnan
Mr P. Lilburne
Mr M. McGowan
Ms S.F. McGurk
Mr D.R. Michael
Mr S.A. Millman

Mr Y. Mubarakai
Mrs L.M. O'Malley
Mr P. Papalia
Mr S.J. Price
Mr D.T. Punch
Mr J.R. Quigley
Ms M.M. Quirk
Ms R. Saffioti
Ms A. Sanderson
Mr D.A.E. Scaife
Ms J.J. Shaw
Ms R.S. Stephens

Mrs J.M.C. Stojkovski
Dr K. Stratton
Mr C.J. Tallentire
Mr D.A. Templeman
Mr P.C. Tinley
Ms C.M. Tonkin
Mr R.R. Whitby
Ms S.E. Winton
Ms C.M. Rowe (*Teller*)

Noes (5)

Dr D.J. Honey
Mr R.S. Love

Ms L. Mettam
Mr P.J. Rundle

Ms M. Beard (*Teller*)

Pair

Ms H.M. Beazley

Ms M.J. Davies

Question thus passed.