

PERTH CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL — CLINICAL INCIDENTS — PREMIER'S COMMENTS

719. Ms L. METTAM to the Premier:

I have a supplementary question. How can the Premier suggest that the delivery of health is at all better under his watch given record levels of ramping, record levels of poor outcomes that are happening under his watch—ramping at levels three times what we have seen?

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Vasse, next time you get to ask a question, you will not be getting a supplementary. The Premier.

Mr R.H. COOK replied:

That is one of the most deranged sort of responses in a question I have heard in some time.

Ms L. Mettam: Your answer is deranged.

Mr R.H. COOK: What we are witnessing here is the cognitive dissidence that relates to a shadow Minister for Health who is confronted by facts that demonstrate that we on our side of this chamber provide a better level of funding and investment in healthcare services and provide better healthcare services than those opposite.

Ms L. Mettam: You didn't know the facts this morning. You were at Perth Zoo.

Mr R.H. COOK: Madam Speaker, the interjections from the other side demonstrates thus.

Dr D.J. Honey interjected.

Mr R.H. COOK: Madam Speaker, this mob are absolutely hapless and hopeless—they really are. They come into this place day in, day out with a complete disregard for the facts of the circumstance.

Ms L. Mettam: Elective surgery blew out.

Mr R.H. COOK: I take the interjection about elective surgery. Let us look at that. Admissions from elective surgery in August —

Ms L. Mettam interjected.

Mr R.H. COOK: Just be quiet, member, and listen for a change!

Ms L. Mettam interjected.

Mr R.H. COOK: Just be quiet.

Ms L. Mettam interjected.

Mr R.H. COOK: No, be quiet. Be quiet.

Ms L. Mettam: No.

Several members interjected.

Mr R.H. COOK: Be quiet, member! Member, just be quiet and listen to the facts.

Several members interjected.

Ms J.J. Shaw interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Swan Hills, that is out of order —

Ms J.J. Shaw: Sorry.

The SPEAKER: — and points of order are heard in silence.

Point of Order

Mr R.S. LOVE: It is quite extraordinary to have the Premier berating the member for Vasse and inviting interjections, and then further berating her. Madam Speaker, I ask you to draw him to order.

The SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition, there was only one thing more extraordinary, and it was the member for Vasse dissenting from the Speaker's ruling, which was completely out of order. There is only one person in this chamber who backchats the Speaker after the Speaker gives advice. This place cannot work unless all members take the advice of the Speaker and submit themselves to the standing orders. I have little sympathy for the member for Vasse in this circumstance. She has been advised how to ask a supplementary question so many times. We got the level of interjections because everybody else here can see what has occurred and the member for Vasse cannot. It is one simple question that pertains to the previous question. There is no commentary and no argument. It is not two questions with an "and" or "but" in the middle. That is how you ask a supplementary question. This is a response to a supplementary. It should not be an extended answer. The Premier is endeavouring to give a concise and

brief answer so that we can move on to the next question and somebody else can have a go. That cannot happen if we get incessant interjections from the member for Vasse. There are rules here. You ask a question; you get to ask a supplementary. Those questions and the supplementary are at the discretion of the Speaker—something the member for Vasse should learn.

Ms M.M. Quirk: Throw her out!

The SPEAKER: You will be learning it, too, member for Landsdale if you are going to interject.

Questions without Notice Resumed

Mr R.H. COOK: Despite the sighs from the member for Vasse, I wish to furnish her with the facts. In August 2023 compared with August 2022, admissions for elective surgery increased by over 11 per cent. There has been a 12.6 per cent reduction in the size of the elective surgery waiting list; a 36 per cent reduction in the number of over-boundary cases on the waitlist. That means a 36 per cent reduction in people who wait longer than clinically preferred times. There is also a continued focus by WA hospitals on achieving record high elective surgery rates, including that the overall number of reportable elective surgery procedures performed in WA has increased in the past 18 months. Let us have a look at the 2023 statistics. We have had the three highest months on record for the number of elective surgery procedures performed. There were 16 155 in March; 16 314 in May; and 17 045 in August. It hurts me to say this: we have the best health minister in this state's history! She is performing an outstanding job in leading our health system under difficult circumstances in this post-COVID-19 period and we are so proud of the work the doctors, nurses and leaders in our hospitals are doing to get on top of difficult issues and get our hospital system back into equilibrium. Ramping is going down, elective surgeries are going up and waiting times are reducing, and that is all down to the great work of this WA Labor government.