

**11 November 1999**

**Health Minister says Oppositions campaign to discredit the waiting list data is desperate and dishonest**

Health Minister Wendy Edmond said today the Opposition's campaign to discredit the waiting list data was desperate and dishonest.

"This government is the first to publish elective surgery waiting lists, hospital by hospital, category by category, speciality by speciality.

"The quarterly Elective Waiting List Report is on notice boards in hospitals. Your local GP has a copy. It is available on the Internet. There are thousands printed and distributed.

"There has been no manipulation of waiting list figures. Waiting list data is available to all. The level of transparency is unprecedented.

"The Opposition collected the same data in exactly the same way, the only difference is this Government publishes the data openly and honestly as part of its elective surgery strategy and as part of its commitment to open and accountable government.

"The pathetic attempts of the Opposition to claim that specialist outpatient appointment waiting times would provide the "real picture" of elective surgery waiting times shows a complete misunderstanding of the hospital system.

"People waiting for specialist outpatient appointments do not necessarily need surgery.

"Elective surgery coordinators from Queensland Health have developed processes to ensure that once a surgeon completes a surgery booking form for a patient, that patient's name is immediately placed on the Elective Surgery Waiting List.

"That is the "real picture", that is the truth.

"All hospitals have processes in place to ensure there are no "hidden" waiting lists at any stage of the process at any facility across the State," Ms Edmond said.

**Media Contact:**

**Shari Armistead**

**3234 1190**