

TRANSCRIPT

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Transcript: AMA Queensland President, Dr Nick Yim, ABC Radio Brisbane, *Breakfast with Craig and Loretta*, Friday 7 February 2025

Subject: Satellite hospital name change decision

CRAIG ZONCA: They were billed as the saviour to Queensland's overrun health system – satellite hospitals that would ease the pain of the public sector. But their sheer name, well, did the exact opposite for some reason and caused more pain.

LORETTA RYAN: Do you remember this? Despite mounting pressure, former Health Minister Shannon Fentiman remained steadfast in her defence of the title.

CRAIG ZONCA: Yeah, remember this conversation we had with the former Minister on breakfast around whether they should be renamed?

SHANNON FENTIMAN: I think the name says it all, guys. Like the satellite hospital offers specialist hospital services. But the part we're really talking about, where people can walk in and get same day care, is the minor injury and illness clinic.

CRAIG ZONCA: Well, why not call it a clinic then? Minister, you're using this satellite hospital, which is more a marketing phrase than anything else. It's not open 24-seven. You can't stay there overnight. Isn't it just a marketing term that you and your government have chosen to use?

SHANNON FENTIMAN: So Craig, there are about 50 private day hospitals in Queensland. They provide the same services that our satellite hospitals are providing. No one is calling for them to be renamed.

CRAIG ZONCA: That was Shannon Fentiman, the now former Health Minister. So, the name game turned into a bit of a blame game, then an election shame game. I think now we have an end game.

LORETTA RYAN: Satellite hospitals have been renamed satellite health centres. So, does this clarify their purpose and their service? What do you think? We'll hear from the Health Minister in just a moment. But first, to a key opponent of the hospital tag, Dr Nick Yim, President of the Australian Medical Association Queensland. Dr Yim, does this finally put an end to the confusion?

DR NICK YIM: I think this is one of the first steps. The key thing is, we need to continue to have that public education campaign because we do not want people with life threatening conditions

presenting to these health centres. These health centres do provide outpatient services such as dialysis, cancer care and minor injuries, but we still want people presenting to the right location at the right time.

LORETTA RYAN: How much consultation did AMA Queensland have with the new government in the right approach?

DR NICK YIM: I think we had really good consultation with the current government. It is something that we have been working on. At the same time, while this is a name change, I think the big element here is that we must focus on our health workforce because we know that our doctors, nurses and admin staff, we are under the pump. So we need to work on that as a next step as well.

LORETTA RYAN: Does satellite health centre better reflect what the facilities do?

DR NICK YIM: As you alluded to earlier in your announcement, they don't have overnight beds. People do pop in and pop out, and that's something where an education campaign is needed to ensure that Queenslanders remain safe.

LORETTA RYAN: See I'm confused. Do we even need the word satellite? What's the satellite bit?

DR NICK YIM: I think it's more of an outreach of that service or that existing health service. So, to give you an example, in Brisbane we have Metro North and Metro South. So it's a satellite from that centre, it's a play on names. But the key thing, I think, is this is the first step.

CRAIG ZONCA: The main thing is that people get seen and get treated. That's the number one point here, Nick. We want our health system to be able to service us as we need and not be waiting for hours on end, say, in an emergency department.

DR NICK YIM: One hundred per cent. I think with the recent step of the announcement, of real time data, that's one first step. We need to expand that now to look at what is the data of people waiting for beds, people waiting to get discharged, and I think transparency is the key. So, we also welcome that new announcement this week with regards to the health time data.

LORETTA RYAN: Do you know, this just sort of reminds me a bit of the Athletics Australia, Australian athletics name change, doesn't it? Some people might be saying – 'can we just get on with it. What's in name?'

DR NICK YIM: I think with the reports last year, it did demonstrate public confusion was one of the key elements of presenting at the wrong location. But as we alluded to, this is the time to move on to the next step and focus on workforce, infrastructure, etc.

CRAIG ZONCA: Yeah, and getting the staff that you need to, whether it be in hospitals, in these satellite health centres and the like, I understand there's a review happening as to the services

that will be offered there. Do you think there needs to be anything else added to the list that people can get access to through one of these now satellite health centres?

DR NICK YIM: We welcome the review, but at the same time, if we are adding services to any of these health centres, we need to ensure that we're not splitting the health workforce. So, we're not pulling nurses and doctors say, from the main tertiary hospital and placing them in a health centre, because we're just putting both centres at stretch then.

CRAIG ZONCA: Appreciate your time this morning, Dr Nick Yim, thanks so much.

DR NICK YIM: Always a pleasure.

Contact: AMA Queensland Media, +61 419 735 641, media@amaq.com.au