



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
**MATTERS OF PUBLIC IMPORTANCE**

**Medicare**

**SPEECH**

**Thursday, 1 September 2016**

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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## SPEECH

**Date** Thursday, 1 September 2016  
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**Questioner**  
**Speaker** Kelly, Craig, MP

**Source** House  
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**Responder**  
**Question No.**

**Mr CRAIG KELLY** (Hughes) (16:11): Here we are in the first week back, and what a disappointment the Labor Party in opposition are proving to be. In this matter of public importance debate they are continuing with the same disgraceful 'Mediscare' campaign that we saw at the last election. It should embarrass every single one of them. During an election campaign, it is one thing to stand up and make statements and argue back and forth, or to put things out in brochures, but it is quite another thing to send out text messages, to send out what is in fact a fraudulent document that creates the perception that it is from an official source, from Medicare, and that pushes the lie that the coalition is going to privatise Medicare. Every single member on that side of the chamber should hang their head in shame over that campaign. But what they do? They come in here and wear that deception like a badge of honour. Every single one of them should be disgraced. Whenever they are talking about health policy or Medicare, the first statement they should make is to apologise—apologise for misleading the Australian public. That continues here today with this MPI on so-called cuts to Medicare.

Let us look at the truth and expose what is just another Labor deception and untruth. In 2012-13, the last year of the Labor budget, total health spending was \$61.9 billion. If you listened to Labor, you would think that we have cut that spending this year. In fact, in this current financial year health spending is \$69.1 billion—over \$8 billion more than it was in Labor's last budget. How is that a cut when we are spending \$8 billion more? What about over the forward estimates? We will raise spending on health to \$79 billion. At the end of this three-year term, spending on health will be \$79 billion compared to Labor's last year in government, when it was \$61 billion. That is close to a 30 per cent increase. When you spend more money, when you spend billions of dollars more, it is an increase. Yet Labor comes in here pretending that health spending is being cut.

As for Medicare spending, we have seen it go from \$21 billion in 2014-15 to \$23 billion this year. Over the next four years it will go up to \$27 billion. Another \$4 billion increase is going into Medicare over the forward estimates. Yet we have Labor continuing to perpetuate this untruth that Medicare spending is being cut.

What about the actual number of services? We know, if we compare this year to the last year of the Labor government, that there have been 17 million more swipes of the Medicare card—that is, 17 million more services provided by Medicare. We have bulk-billing rates at historic highs in this nation, yet we hear Labor member after Labor member going on and on about cuts.

The thing is, we would like to put more into health care. I am sure we would all like to put more into health care, but the money has to come from somewhere—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The time for the discussion has concluded.