MENTAL HEALTH — DRUG AND ALCOHOL SERVICES

516. Hon LJIJANNA RAVLICH to the Minister for Mental Health:

I refer to the $19.5 million listed in the 2011–12 state budget to expand drug and alcohol services.

(1) How much of the $19.5 million has been allocated to each of the following regions: Kimberley, Pilbara, Gascoyne, Mid West, Goldfields–Esperance, Great Southern, Wheatbelt, South West, and Peel?

(2) Which organisation or agency has been allocated the funds in each of the above regions?

(3) How many, if any, positions have been generated from this initiative?

(4) Where are these new positions situated, by region and by town?

Hon HELEN MORTON replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question.

(1)–(4) The 2011–12 state budget has specifically targeted funds towards the government’s key priorities of preventing alcohol and other drug problems and providing support for those high-needs groups living in the Kimberley, Pilbara, Goldfields and Carnarvon. Through the royalties for regions fund, $19.3 million has been allocated to strengthen and support the state government’s overall goal of preventing and reducing the adverse impacts of alcohol and other drugs in the Western Australian community. Of the $19.3 million allocated, $9.99 million will go to the Kimberley, $5.36 million to the Pilbara, $2.89 million to the Gascoyne, and $1.06 million will be allocated to the Drug and Alcohol Office to support the Kimberley and Pilbara programs. The Drug and Alcohol Office will conduct a tender process to seek the appropriate services to deliver programs at a local level.

Using these funds, a new dual-purpose alcohol and other drug counselling and sobering-up centre will be established in Carnarvon. The centre will provide counselling and support services for people in Carnarvon and surrounding areas with alcohol and other drug problems and also provide a sobering-up service for those requiring supervision while intoxicated. Up to 36 new FTE positions will be created from the $19.3 million allocated; however, the exact number and locations will be confirmed during the service agreement development with successful tendering agencies.

Other funding is also available to help meet the needs of regional and remote areas. The state government has committed $1.03 million over four years for the expansion of the Prospect Lodge alcohol and other drug rehabilitation service in the Goldfields. This will allow for the existing residential alcohol and other drug service to operate at full capacity.

As part of the state government’s social housing initiative, funding totalling $8.5 million in 2011–12 was allocated for the provision of 15 dwellings for high-needs clients with alcohol and other drug-related problems to help secure safe and well-supported accommodation. Seven of these dwellings will be located in the Kimberley and Goldfields regions. A total of $700 000 of the $1.5 million will fund the support of these clients as they transition from residential rehabilitation back to the community. If members would like to applaud what a fantastic initiative that is for drug and alcohol services in those regions, they may do so.