

BUSSELTON DISTRICT HOSPITAL

830. Mr R.H. COOK to the Minister for Health

I refer to the Liberal Party's election commitment to rebuild the Busselton District Hospital on the site of the current hospital.

- (1) Will the minister confirm that instead of delivering a new hospital, as promised, his government plans on refurbishing the current buildings?
- (2) Will the minister confirm that the anticipated completion date of the Busselton hospital is now 2015, some four to five years later than it would have been completed under Labor?
- (3) Can the minister confirm that, in actual fact, the hospital will be subject to further delays due to difficult environmental issues on his chosen site?
- (4) Is it not true that the hospital site will have little room for further growth, despite large increases in demand with the region's growth in population?
- (5) What additional resources will the minister provide to the Bunbury Regional Hospital given that approximately 1 000 patients will be transferred from Busselton as a result of the delay in the Busselton hospital development?

Dr K.D. HAMES replied:

We have seen before that, while there are two doctors of medicine on this side of the house, we have a doctor of spin on that side of the house!

- (1)-(5) Yes, I can confirm that it is not true that we are going to have a largely refurbished hospital as an alternative to the new hospital. Leading up to the last election, there was overwhelming support from the Busselton community to our election commitment to keep that hospital on the site of the original hospital, where the community wanted it to be built, in contrast to where the Labor government was going to build it. The hospital plan is still being developed. I can say that it is progressing extremely well. Two private sector groups are involved in looking at add-on components and what they can provide at that hospital. It will be a new hospital with some components of the old hospital refurbished—sure. Why not? Why would we waste good infrastructure such as the old hospital by just bulldozing it all down? There are good opportunities to use parts of the old hospital. But the new hospital will be largely a new construction.