

BUNBURY HOSPITAL — SEXUAL ASSAULT VICTIMS

**1385. Hon SALLY TALBOT to the minister representing the Minister for Health:**

I refer to procedures for the treatment of sexual assault victims presenting at Bunbury Hospital.

- (1) Does Bunbury Hospital have a policy for the mandatory forensic examination of sexual assault patients presenting at the hospital?
- (2) If yes to (1) —
  - (a) does the policy require a forensic examination to be undertaken as a matter of course;
  - (b) are all staff briefed on the policy;
  - (c) is the implementation of the policy monitored to ensure all staff follow it; and
  - (d) are there enough suitably qualified staff to implement the policy; and, if not, why not?
- (3) Is the minister aware of community concerns about the lack of mandatory forensic examinations being carried out by hospital staff?
- (4) If yes to (3), what has the minister done to ensure compliance with the policy?
- (5) If no to (3), will the minister act to ensure that forensic examinations are carried out to better support the victims?

**Hon DONNA FARAGHER replied:**

I thank the member for some notice of the question.

- (1) In the case of alleged sexual assault patients presenting at Bunbury Hospital emergency department, clinicians are guided by the WA Country Health Service's sexual assault resource centre emergency care history and checklist, as well as the WACHS south west standards of care for clients who present with alleged sexual assault procedure. Forensic examination of patients presenting to the emergency department is not mandatory, as the presenting patient must consent to examinations. There are two stages to forensic examination, including an early evidence kit and a full forensic examination.
- (2)
  - (a) Refer to (1).
  - (b) Yes.
  - (c) All incidents related to patients presenting with alleged sexual assault are thoroughly investigated by the emergency department nurse unit manager and the clinical director. However, there is no mandatory requirement and patient consent is required.
  - (d) Yes.
- (3) Yes. However, there is no mandatory requirement and patient consent is required.
- (4) All clinical staff in the emergency department have been educated on the checklist and procedure referred to in answer (1) and have received recent communication to refresh their knowledge of the policy. In addition, WA Country Health Service south west is currently reviewing the policy with clinical staff in the emergency department and the obstetrics and gynaecology service to identify any potential improvements.
- (5) Not applicable.