

REID REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS, IMPLEMENTATION BY DR NEALE FONG

**364. Mr J.B. D'ORAZIO to the Minister for Health:**

Will the minister outline how the recommendations of the Reid report will be implemented under the guidance of Dr Neale Fong, as announced by the minister last week?

**Mr J.A. McGINTY replied:**

I thank the member for the question. I was very pleased to announce last week the appointment of Dr Neale Fong to implement the reforms of the public health system that were outlined in the Reid report. The common ground for both sides of the House is that we agree that Dr Neale Fong is an outstanding hospital administrator. He is certainly one of the leading administrators in the best private health care system in Australia. We hope that he will be able to bring those skills and standards to bear in the public sector also. As was announced, Dr Fong will take on the dual roles of executive chairman of the health reform and implementation task force and chief executive of the North Metropolitan Area Health Service. Dr Fong's appointment has been welcomed by many in the health sector, not the least of whom is the President of the Australian Medical Association, Dr Brent Donovan, who is reported in a media release as saying -

Dr Fong is an accomplished administrator who will bring a wealth of experience to the review process and to the running of the North Metropolitan Area Service which includes both Royal Perth and Sir Charles Gairdner Hospitals . . .

What we have planned for Dr Fong in the short to medium term is three specific initiatives so far as Royal Perth Hospital and Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital are concerned. With effect from 1 July the north-south model of tertiary hospital care will be applied in Perth. That will do away with the existing three health regions in the metropolitan area with the natural boundary being the Swan River. As the chief executive of the North Metropolitan Area Health Service, Dr Fong will merge the administration of both Royal Perth Hospital and Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital. That has been at the core of this recommendation; we need to do away with duplication, waste and the chewing up of the scarce health dollar, which has occurred through having these two large tertiary hospitals within three kilometres of each other in the city area. I am sure that significant economies will be introduced as a result of merging the administration. The third step in this process in the short to medium term will be to have one hospital operating across the two Royal Perth Hospital and Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital sites.

Recommendation No 29 of the Reid report states that there should be one tertiary hospital in the northern area health service and that it should be located on one site. It went on to state that the preference was for the hospital to be located on the Queen Elizabeth II Medical Centre site. We will meet the recommendation from the Reid report that there be one tertiary hospital in the northern area within the relatively short term. We will deal with how that will be addressed in the future.

I recently held discussions with the clinical staff of Royal Perth Hospital about this issue. I will place on record correspondence received from Dr James Flexman, who is chairman of the clinical association. His letter states -

Dear Minister,

Thank you for meeting with representatives of the Royal Perth Hospital clinical staff on 14th June. As discussed the clinical staff wish to embrace the reform process while minimising the problems associated with the implementation process. In particular we wish to minimise disruption to clinical service delivery and avoid losing high quality staff to the public sector due to uncertainty. Your agreement to an initial dual campus single tertiary hospital with role delineation in the North will greatly assist a smooth transition and will be well received by the clinical staff. We look forward to meeting the new Northern Area Chief Executive to assist with the transition.

. . .

Dr James Flexman

I am delighted that we have been able to figure a way through this very difficult issue that I am sure will deliver results for the health system in Western Australia and meet the requirements of the Reid system as well.