

KIMBERLEY, CAPITAL WORKS MONEYS

148. Mrs C.A. MARTIN to the Minister for Health:

Can the minister provide an update on the allocation of funds from the \$34 million pool set aside for capital works in the Kimberley.

Mr R.C. KUCERA replied:

I thank the member for Kimberley for hosting a trip last weekend to the Kimberley, during which I was fortunate to visit the good people of Halls Creek, Kununurra and Fitzroy Crossing. While visiting those communities we were pleased to announce a brand-new \$7 million hospital for Halls Creek, the planning for which will commence almost immediately. That planning process will be finished by the end of the wet and money will be available for the building to commence next year.

I also pay tribute to the Aboriginal community leaders I met in those towns, in particular Maureen Carter, who now heads up the Aboriginal Medical Service at Fitzroy Crossing. I have been visiting these communities for the past 30-odd years and this is the first time that I have seen a community with real vision and a sense of direction for the future, whereby it will take back its own destiny. I pay tribute to that community. I was privileged to be given a copy of a videotape made for the Special Broadcasting Service entitled *Birthright*. I urge every member of this House to watch that video, which shows women being empowered to take care of their own health issues. Those communities are being turned back into communities with vision and a sense of direction. I was pleased to announce that \$7 million development and, as the member for Kimberley mentioned, that is part of a \$34 million redevelopment and renewal program for the Kimberley health services generally. More power to those people, who will now work towards putting on the ground a health service that suits their community.