

COUNTRY HOSPITAL MEDICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEES, REMUNERATION OF CHAIRMEN

778. Hon BARRY HOUSE to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Health:

I refer to doctors who agree to become chairmen of country hospital medical advisory committees.

- (1) Why has the modest remuneration for these duties not been revised since 1993?
- (2) When will it be reviewed?
- (3) Why are these people not indemnified by the Department of Health when other employees such as directors of nursing and medical directors, as well as general members of the medical advisory committees, are indemnified?
- (4) Will the Government take steps to correct this inequitable situation?
- (5) If not, why not?

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH replied:

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

- (1)-(2) The issue of remuneration of chairs of country hospital medical advisory committees is being actively considered in the context of a range of other issues, including indemnity.
- (3)-(5) It is longstanding government policy to provide adequate ex gratia support to persons, whether employees or members of government boards or committees, including medical advisory committees, who become the subject of legal proceedings as a consequence of carrying out responsibilities of a public nature. This support is given provided that the relevant conduct was in good faith and reasonable and, of course, that the provision of indemnity is compatible with any relevant contractual or other arrangement with the person seeking indemnity. Each application is determined on its merits. There is no reason in principle that an application for indemnity by a chairman of a medical advisory committee would be treated by government any differently from an application by an ordinary member of such a committee. Officers from the Department of Health are not aware of any claim being made against a member of a medical advisory committee.