

AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION, NEGOTIATED AGREEMENT

367. Mrs EDWARDES to the Minister for Health:

I remind the minister of his comment in this place on 22 August, when he sought to distance himself from the outcome of the negotiated agreement with the Australian Medical Association by saying that it was given to him based on negotiations that had commenced under the previous Government.

- (1) As the first meeting to formally commence negotiations between the AMA and the Department of Health took place on 22 February 2001, which was after the state election, will the minister apologise for misleading the House?
- (2) Given that the agreement was signed off by the AMA, the Department of Health, the Department of Productivity and Labour Relations and the Government's expenditure review committee, when will the minister sit down with the AMA to implement the agreement as negotiated?

Mr KUCERA replied:

- (1)-(2) My advice from the previous Commissioner of Health was that these negotiations have been going on for many years. I must correct the member for Kingsley. I notice that the member got a copy of the letter this week. It may be the view of the AMA that there was an agreement, but there was not an agreement. There was an agreement to put a proposal to Government, but that proposal was rejected because it did not include the kinds of reforms that this health system needs to compete in today's modern health world. The Government has been in negotiations. I met with the AMA in the House the other day. We are now in a position to put the AMA's proposals into operation and we have been doing that. A formal proposal will be put to the AMA in due course.