

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES NURSE — KIMBERLEY

**231. Hon SALLY TALBOT to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Health:**

- (1) Can the minister confirm that a communicable diseases nurse has recently been sent from Perth to the Kimberley; and, if so, where is this nurse located?
- (2) Can the minister confirm that there is an outbreak of Hansen's disease—leprosy—and tuberculosis in the area where the nurse has been sent?
- (3) Can the minister confirm that there has been no contact tracing for leprosy since 2012; and, if not, what is the current procedure for detecting leprosy?
- (4) If yes to (1) and no to (2), why has the nurse been sent to the Kimberley?
- (5) What action is the minister taking to ensure these outbreaks are dealt with?

**Hon ALYSSA HAYDEN replied:**

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

- (1) Yes. The nurse was located in Broome for the period of 4 May 2015 to 11 October 2015 and travelled extensively throughout the Kimberley region.
- (2) There is no outbreak of Hansen's disease or tuberculosis in the Kimberley.
- (3) There has been continued contact tracing for Hansen's disease in the Kimberley. Although there is no current outbreak, Hansen's disease has had a presence in the Kimberley for many years. In the last six years, four cases of Hansen's disease have been acquired in the Kimberley.
- (4) The Kimberley has a dispersed population and dispersed primary health workforce. Current tuberculosis cases have required extensive contact tracing across the region. The nurse has assisted with complex contact tracing in the Dampier Peninsula, Derby and surrounding Gibb River Road communities within the Fitzroy Valley and Halls Creek.
- (5) Nil. There are no current outbreaks of these diseases in the Kimberley.