

DRUGS, BUPRENORPHINE, PRESCRIPTION PROCEDURES

1276. Hon Barry House to the Parliamentary Secretary representing the Minister for Health

I refer to the use of buprenorphine to treat narcotic addicts and ask -

- (1) Is it a fact that any patient who misses their buprenorphine dosing for two days in Western Australia has to see their doctor again before getting another dose from their pharmacist?
- (2) If so, why is the WA Health Department guidelines only two days?

Hon SUE ELLERY replied:

- (1) No, it is not two missed days, but two missed doses. Because of the long acting nature of buprenorphine some patients are on every second day dosing regimes.
- (2) This guideline aims to ensure patient safety. WA Guidelines conform to the National Clinical Guidelines and Procedures for the Use of Buprenorphine in the Treatment of Heroin Dependence. The National Guidelines were developed by a National Expert Advisory Group to the Intergovernmental Committee on Drugs and reflect what is known to be best practice in pharmacotherapy treatment.