

PEEL AND JOONDALUP HEALTH CAMPUSES, REVIEW OF CONTRACTS

**742. Mr MARSHALL to the Minister for Health:**

I refer to the government review of contracts with the Peel and Joondalup Health Campuses and consequent comments by the minister that changes would be made at both hospitals to improve levels of accountability and transparency and deliver better health services.

- (1) Has the minister received any advice from his department that accountability at the Peel Health Campus, or the standard of health services provided at the campus, is in any way deficient?
- (2) Was anyone at the Peel Health Campus consulted in any way during the course of that review?

**Mr KUCERA replied:**

- (1)-(2) I will answer the second part of the question. I am not aware of what consultation took place. That was part of the process of examining the contracts. I understand that this review was of the contractual arrangements between the Government and the hospitals, or the suppliers of services at both hospitals. In the case of Peel Health Campus, it is Health Solutions, and in the case of Joondalup Health Campus, it is Mayne Health. The consultation was not about services; it was about the contractual arrangements themselves. In relation to Peel Health Campus, no suggestion was made, or conveyed to me, that there was a problem with the supply of services. The difficulty with the contract that I expressed in my statement yesterday was that no link existed between the contract and the control of medical services. That must be done by the Commissioner of Health under a different set of regulations and statutes. According to the advice that was given to me, it would have been preferable to have some linkage between the contractual arrangements for the Government essentially hiring a hospital, and the conduct of that hospital. I am told, however, in consultation with the Director General of Health that that can be achieved through two avenues: first, by him being able to use the Medical Act and its regulations; and, secondly, as a result of the cooperation we have had.

I met with the management of Peel Health Campus last week, and no aspersions have been cast on it. There have been difficulties with Joondalup Health Campus on a number of issues, such as the relationship between the management and the Australian Medical Association in the hiring of doctors, and actions of the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission. Problems have also been expressed about the supply of services at Joondalup, in two very well publicised incidents. My understanding is that the operation of the contract for Peel Health Campus has been satisfactory, and the contract itself stands up. I thank the member for Dawesville for raising these concerns, but the people of Peel and Mandurah can be satisfied with the operation of their hospital. That is not to say that the Government should not make sure that issues of accountability are built in to contracts.