

BANSEMER, MR ALAN, CONTRIBUTION TO PUBLIC HEALTH

173. Mr D'ORAZIO to the Minister for Health:

Can the minister outline the contribution made to public health in Western Australia by the outgoing Commissioner of Health, Alan Bansemer, and how successful he has been in laying the foundations for future reform to the health system?

Mr KUCERA replied:

I thank the member for some notice of this question. I am pleased to tell the House that I am answering a question about a person who has become a close friend over the past four months. Alan Bansemer has been at the helm of the Health Department of Western Australia for the past six years. He deserves high praise for quite ably steering a complex and very large structure through difficult times over those past six years. He has been invaluable to me in the past four months and I have enjoyed working with him. I would go so far as to say that we have become firm friends. Health is about to undergo a long-term and extensive period of reform and repair. Mr Bansemer has left structures in place to ensure that this goes smoothly. As he said in a statement issued yesterday, and I quote -

At present, there is an opportunity to make a serious improvement to the administration of health services in this State, and it should be grasped by all collaboratively and enthusiastically.

I am pleased to say that the Chief Medical Officer of the Health Department, Bryant Stokes, has agreed to take on the commissioner's role until a position can be advertised and candidates sought in line with the Public Sector Management Act. The esteem in which Professor Stokes is regarded in the medical and wider community will ensure that the health system will remain stable during this transitional period. Again, I thank Alan Bansemer and I am sure all members will join me in wishing him well.