

NURSES, RECRUITMENT CAMPAIGN

**161. Mr P.W. ANDREWS to the Minister for Health:**

Further to the debate on the national review of nursing education in this place last night, will the minister provide further details on the major recruitment campaign that he mentioned will occur in October?

**Mr R.C. KUCERA replied:**

I thank the member for this question, for the interest he shows in this subject and for the work he does in his electorate.

Mr P.D. Omodei: We all have an interest in nurses!

Mr R.C. KUCERA: Now we know why he goes home early every Thursday! This is an important issue. The major recruitment campaign I referred to yesterday is that of which I recently advised by letter every nurse on the register in this State. I also advised the state health management team, the Nursing Issues Committee and the Australian Nursing Federation of the campaign. I welcome the contributions all those parties have made towards finalising this concept. A request for quotes for research has been let to provide information on the campaign and was advertised on the state health supply information bulletin board on 29 July 2002. A call for tender for the advertising was placed in *The West Australian* on 25 May.

I have made no secret of the shortage of nurses. We are working desperately towards ensuring we can rectify it. That is why we have invested \$16.4 million in recruitment. In an unprecedented commitment for Western Australia \$1 million of that will be spent in direct advertising. Our message will be very much targeted at inviting the thousands of nurses who have left the profession to return to it, particularly those who are considering making a return.

We launched the recruitment campaign called NurseLink in May this year. At the time, we advised that the campaign would be statewide, national and international. The next phase of television advertising, together with an extended print campaign, will start in the immediate future. This campaign is about not only recruiting nurses, but also explaining and reinforcing the Government's commitment to our existing nurse work force.

The Government acknowledges the pressures it is under and that some fundamental issues must be dealt with to get nurses out of agencies and back into the health system where they belong and to free up the money we need to do this. I noted yesterday that the member for Murdoch, the opposition spokesperson on health, supported, albeit not explicitly, our recruitment campaign.

Mr M.F. Board interjected.

Mr R.C. KUCERA: Is the member for Murdoch saying that we should not be recruiting? Does he not support us in recruiting extra nurses?

Mr M.F. Board interjected.

Mr R.C. KUCERA: I am very pleased to announce this recruitment campaign; the expenditure of \$1 million is an unprecedented move to bring nurses back into our great health system.