

NURSES, RECRUITMENT CAMPAIGN

282. Mr J.R. QUIGLEY to the Minister for Health:

Will the minister advise the result of the first phase of the State Government's nursing recruitment campaign?

Mr R.C. KUCERA replied:

I thank the member for some notice of this question. I also thank the member for the excellent work he has been doing in supporting the Osborne Park Hospital recently.

The first phase of the "You are the One" media campaign will wrap up on Sunday. I am delighted to report that, since the campaign began three and a half weeks ago, we have received nearly 400 expressions of interest through phone calls and e-mails. Of these, 118 phone calls have come from enrolled nurses and 131 from registered nurses, all of whom want to return to the profession. It is clear that the Government's decision to offer free renewal of registration and refresher courses has been an extremely important factor for these former nurses who want to get back to work. They are desperately needed. Since the NurseLink program opened in January this year, we have received a little over 1 000 expressions of interest. We have also been encouraged by the early results of the media campaign, which will resume again next year. We wish to encourage as many former nurses as possible back into the system.

This morning I read the second reading speech of the Nurses Amendment Bill 2002. The nurse practitioners legislation has been welcomed with a great deal of excitement by the Nurses Board and nurses right across Western Australia. It is a further step in this Government's commitment to renewing and rebuilding the nursing work force in this State.