

DENTAL CLINICS, WAITING LISTS

1372. Dr Constable to the Minister for Health

- (1) How many patients are on the waiting lists at each of the following dental clinics -
  - (a) Fremantle;
  - (b) Rockingham;
  - (c) Armadale;
  - (d) Victoria Park;
  - (e) Middle Swan;
  - (f) Como;
  - (g) North Perth; and
  - (h) Warwick?
- (2) How many full-time and part-time staff work in each dental clinic?
- (3) How long is the average waiting period at each of the dental clinics listed in (1)?
- (4) What is the average waiting period for an appointment at all public dental clinics in WA?
- (5) Has the Government set benchmarks for waiting times for clinics to work towards?
- (6) If yes to (5), what are those benchmarks?
- (7) If no to (5), why not?

Mr KUCERA replied:

- (1) The waiting lists comprise persons waiting for non urgent treatment or a routine checkup. Patients requiring emergency care are prioritised to receive treatment on the same day and this treatment is dealt with separately to the following waitlists (as at end of January 2002):
  - (a) Fremantle - 1213
  - (b) Rockingham - 1596
  - (c) Armadale - 1024
  - (d) Victoria Park - 1542
  - (e) Middle Swan - 1906
  - (f) Como - 163
  - (g) North Perth - 1680
  - (h) Warwick - 2374
- (2)
  - (a) Fremantle - Full-time - 21, Part-time - 4
  - (b) Rockingham - Full-time - 21, Part-time - 1
  - (c) Armadale - Full-time - 16, Part-time - 3
  - (d) Victoria Park - Full-time - 22, Part-time - 2
  - (e) Middle Swan Full-time - 17, Part-time - 6
  - (f) Como - Full-time - 8, Part-time - 0
  - (g) North Perth - Full-time - 22, Part-time - 5
  - (h) Warwick - Full-time - 26 Part-time - 4
- (3) The waiting time is determined by the average time patients, who were removed from the waiting list in the previous month, had been on the waiting list. The average length of time patients are waiting for general dental care at the following clinics is (as at end of January 2002):
  - (a) Fremantle - 9.0 months
  - (b) Rockingham - 11.0 months
  - (c) Armadale - 15.0 months
  - (d) Victoria Park - 10.0 months
  - (e) Middle Swan - 11.0 months
  - (f) Como - 3.0 months
  - (g) North Perth - 14.0 months
  - (h) Warwick - 7.0 months
- (4) 11 months.

- (5)-(7) While no benchmarks have been set every effort continues to be made by public dental clinics to treat eligible patients in need of emergency care on the day they present. At this stage, there is a guiding principle for treatment of waitlists patients that all get treatment as soon as possible.

Eligible patients are also able to access Government subsidised care in the metropolitan area at the Oral Health Centre of Western Australia and through private dental practitioners who participate in the Metropolitan Patient Dental Subsidy Scheme.