

URGENT CARE CLINICS

**515. Ms M.J. DAVIES to the Minister for Health:**

I have a supplementary question. At a time when regional emergency departments are under pressure and struggling to cope with nurse and doctor shortages in one of the worst flu seasons we have seen in recent history, does the minister concede that his failure to deliver on this election commitment to date is hurting our regional communities?

**Mr R.H. COOK replied:**

I take on good faith the member's genuine concern about the health of people in our community. I draw her attention to the work that we are doing in some of our emergency departments across the WA Country Health Service, which are doing an outstanding job. For instance, I draw the member's attention to the Busselton Health Campus emergency department, which has a four-hour rule performance of 86.9 per cent. It is performing extremely well.

**Ms M.J. Davies:** With respect, that is not the question. The question was in relation to a commitment you made.

**Mr R.H. COOK:** In relation to the member's own electorate, that emergency department is performing at a level of 87.2 per cent, which means that 87.2 per cent of all patients who go into the Northam Health Service's ED are treated, discharged or admitted within four hours. That is a fantastic performance. It shows that those EDs are performing at a very high level. Yes, the staff in these hospitals work hard, but it is not fair to characterise their performance as being under pressure; they are actually exceeding a lot of the performance of our metropolitan hospitals. Naturally, we are concerned about the performance of the metropolitan hospitals, particularly Royal Perth Hospital and Fiona Stanley Hospital, but the member draws the chamber's attention to a very important issue—that is, doing what is right for the patients of Western Australia. That is why the McGowan government is focused on putting patients first by making sure that we have urgent care clinics and a network that extends the reach of primary health care in the state and ensures that all patients get the care they need, when they need it, in the community in which they live.