

HOSPITALS — REGIONAL — SAFETY

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

I refer to the alarming number of code blacks in regional hospitals between 2017 and 2019, including 156 in Kalgoorlie, 43 in Geraldton and 46 in Karratha and Port Hedland.

- (1) Will the minister confirm that regional hospitals will benefit from his announcement on Monday of \$5 million allocated to stop the violence?
- (2) If yes to (1), which hospitals can expect to receive funding, and what percentage of the total will that be?
- (3) If no to (1), what will the minister do to improve staff and patient safety in regional hospitals?

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

I thank the member for the question. It is a very valid one and one that concerns all of us.

- (1)–(3) We often think, in terms of violence, of people in large, city-based emergency departments with a lot of people around. Often, it is situations in which people are working in smaller, regional-based hospitals, where they do not have the same level of support. Indeed, the security infrastructure is potentially not as robust as it is in the metropolitan hospitals. I can confirm for the member that this is a system-wide response. That is the reason why, following the summit that we held with hospital workers and leaders on 24 June, I directed the director general to take charge of this project to ensure that we have appropriate levels of security for doctors, nurses and, indeed, patients, right across the system. I do not have for the member a breakdown in terms of regional versus metropolitan for that \$5 million allocation, but I can confirm that it will mean that we have better security measures in our smaller hospitals in regional Western Australia. We want to make sure that doctors and nurses can go to work understanding that they will be protected and will have the support of the system when they confront issues associated with a patient exhibiting antisocial behaviour. We will not tolerate it. It is important to make sure that this is a system-wide approach, not simply a city-based hospital approach.