

KING EDWARD MEMORIAL HOSPITAL FOR WOMEN — STAFF

430. Ms M.J. DAVIES to the Minister for Health:

I refer to the second rally that is being held today at King Edward Memorial Hospital for Women by the Australian Nursing Federation and the hospital staff who are scared, anxious and overwhelmed by the crisis in our health system and the private hospitals giving cash incentives to recruit nurses. Why is the minister refusing to implement short-term measures put to him by the Australian Nursing Federation, such as improved parking for staff and more flexible rosters to retain existing nurses and attract additional critical staff?

Mr R.H. COOK replied:

Last week we announced a range of measures to create incentives to make sure that nurses are supported better in the workplace, making sure that we can create a good clinical environment for the people they care for. In addition, we continue to work with the Australian Nursing Federation around a range of its proposals. Mark Olson has come up with about a dozen 10-point plans recently. I am very close to Mark, and we work through those on an ongoing basis. To some extent, the nurses at King Edward Memorial Hospital for Women are anxious about safety outside the hospital as well as the parking issue. Obviously, parking remains an issue, as it does in hospitals anywhere in the world. The hospital leadership continues to work on these issues with both the staff and the City of Subiaco to see what remedies we can put in place.

However, the best thing we can do for the doctors, nurses, allied health support staff and patients, particularly the women of Western Australia, at King Edward Memorial Hospital is to build them a brand new hospital. That is why the government has committed \$1.8 billion to ensure that we can provide for the needs of women and babies into the future. At the moment we are actively engaged with clinical staff around that major project.