

NORTHAM HOSPITAL — OBSTETRIC SERVICE

Petition

MS M.J. DAVIES (Central Wheatbelt — Minister for Water) [3.00 pm]: I have a petition containing 18 signatures that conforms to the standing orders and reads —

To the Honourable the Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament Assembled.

We, the undersigned, are General Practitioners working in the Wheatbelt of Western Australia. We say that the re-establishment of the Obstetrics service at Northam Regional Hospital is a vital and appropriate element in the planned upgrade of the Northam Hospital.

Northam Regional Hospital serves the Local Government areas of Toodyay, Koorda, Mukinbudin, Merredin, Narembeen, Bruce Rock, Quairading, York and Northam. There are about 700 births each year in this area, and at the moment all of those women need to travel to Midland or Perth for delivery and for some of their antenatal visits.

We feel that the health and amenity of our patients in the Wheatbelt is impaired by the lack of an obstetric service at Northam Regional hospital.

We feel that a Salaried Service model is the only viable option for Northam Regional Hospital Obstetric Service at the moment, in view of the fact that there are no local practitioners prepared to provide a full time Obstetric Service to the Northam Regional Hospital.

An appropriate Obstetrics Service requires the infrastructure of Birthing Suites, Theatre and Emergency Department, all of which are available at the Northam Regional Hospital, and it requires 24 hr availability of Midwifery Staff, Obstetric Staff, Anaesthetic Staff and Theatre Staff.

The service should include an Antenatal Clinic and have provision for shared antenatal care with Wheatbelt GPs.

We would support an Obstetric Service at the Northam Regional Hospital by referring our Wheatbelt patients for shared care.

Now we ask the Legislative Assembly to provide an appropriate Obstetrics Service at Northam Regional Hospital.

[See petition 379.]

Nonconforming Petition

Ms M.J. DAVIES: I also have a petition containing 885 signatures in the same terms, but it does not conform to the standing orders. I intend to bring that to the attention of the Minister for Health, given the widespread community support for the re-establishment of maternity services at Northam.