

CORONAVIRUS — AT-RISK YOUTH

**478. Ms M.J. DAVIES to the Minister for Community Services:**

I have a supplementary question. The minister's own department has observed that for close to a year the south west, great southern and wheatbelt have all had close to zero available youth crisis beds. Has the government prioritised crisis housing for youth in the south west, great southern and the wheatbelt in its budget process?

**Ms S.F. McGURK replied:**

One of the elements that I outlined in my response was a bringing forward of the \$34 million Housing First commitment that we announced last December. We announced that in Bunbury because some of that Housing First work will be done in Bunbury. I was very pleased to meet, with the member for Bunbury, a whole lot of stakeholders, service providers, the local council and the local regional development commission to talk through our approach. We received a really good response from the people who are working with homeless people on the ground and understand that we need a strategic, evidence-based approach, and that is what we are doing. The Housing First approach includes some rental assistance for people to get into private rentals. Some of that assistance will be available for young people. It will also take pressure off the system which, in turn, can mean that young people can avail themselves of some of the services that might be freed up.