

BUNBURY DENTAL CLINIC, FUNDING

1095. Hon BARRY HOUSE to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Health:

- (1) Why have funds not been allocated to the Bunbury Dental Clinic for children receiving orthodontic treatment since the change of government last year?
- (2) Is the minister aware that because of this funding cutback there is currently a waiting list of 134 children seeking treatment compared with a normal annual waiting list of 30-40 children, which is readily cleared up?
- (3) When will funds be allocated to provide these children with this urgently needed orthodontic treatment?

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH replied:

I thank the member for some notice of this question.

- (1) Funds have been allocated to the Bunbury Dental Clinic. The current allocation is greater than the allocation in the previous budget. Currently, \$80 000 per annum is allocated to the provision of subsidised orthodontic services to eligible patients in Bunbury.
- (2) There has been no funding cutback for subsidised orthodontic treatment in Bunbury. The waiting list has appeared to increase due to a greater number of younger patients being referred earlier by the school dental service over the past six to 12 months. However, it is estimated that 30 to 50 per cent of patients on the waiting list will not need orthodontic treatment. Many of the younger patients are not currently waiting for care but will remain on the waiting list for up to three or four years before treatment can be appropriately commenced.
- (3) Not applicable.