

COMMUNITY DRUG SUMMIT, FUNDING

333. Mr BOARD to the Minister for Health:

Over the past few weeks, a number of questions have been put to the Minister for Health about the health budget. On each of those occasions, the minister indicated that matters which related to the budget were matters for the budget, and that he would indicate what they were at a later stage. However, in the past couple of days the minister has indicated in the media that no money will be available to fund the recommendations that came out of the Community Drug Summit. Why has the minister failed to secure any funding to implement the recommendations of the Community Drug Summit over the next 12 months, given his 13 press releases leading up to the summit and his indication during the summit that he would act immediately to implement recommendations that arose?

Mr KUCERA replied:

The member for Murdoch should catch up and learn his portfolio. I know that the drug portfolio was transferred to health only this year, so I will forgive him for not knowing about it.

Mr Board: Don't be so condescending.

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, members!

Mr KUCERA: The overall global budget is in place for the Department of Health, which includes \$51 million that was encapsulated in drug programs last year. Literally hundreds and hundreds of recommendations were raised during the Community Drug Summit. The Premier will report on a series of firm recommendations on 19 October. The budget process has closed. It was clearly recognised that many of the recommendations from the Community Drug Summit would lead to cost savings or to the ability to rationalise many of the programs that are already in place. I have never put something aside in my household budget for something that I do not know about. It is not the way to save money. As I announced this week, the Community Drug Summit has been dealt with. The budget has \$51 million of existing funds. That may help the Government forge ahead with this issue.