

HOSPITALS, WAITING LISTS

673. Hon P G Pental to the Minister for Health

- (1) How many people are on the surgery waiting lists of the Central Bureau in each of its categories?
- (2) What is the expected length of wait for each of these categories?
- (3) What action is the Government planning to take to reduce the time each listed person waits for surgery?
- (4) Approximately how much funding would be required to reduce the waiting periods to no more than three months?

Mr KUCERA replied:

- (1) Teaching Hospitals:

Category 1 (urgent) 496
Category 2 (semi-urgent) 1 955
Category 3 (routine) 7 280

Non Teaching Hospitals:

Category 1 (urgent) 70
Category 2 (semi-urgent) 1 001
Category 3 (routine) 3 724

- (2) Teaching Hospitals:

Category 1 (urgent) 12 days
Category 2 (semi-urgent) 74 days
Category 3 (routine) 257 days

Non Teaching Hospitals:

Category 1 (urgent) 18 days
Category 2 (semi-urgent) 101 days
Category 3 (routine) 156 days

- (3) This Government is committed to:

☐ Allocate an additional \$8 million over four years to reduce the waiting lists and waiting times that many people with urgent and semi-urgent medical needs experience;

☐ Improve the waiting list and waiting time strategy to require treatment within reasonable and clinically desirable time limits;

☐ Ensure that priority is given to children on the waiting lists;

☐ Strengthen an on-line central bureau for monitoring patient appointments to assist GPs in directing patients to medical practitioners and facilities convenient to them but where waiting lists are shorter; and

☐ Implement a monitoring system to obtain accurate data on the time taken from the original GP referral to secure appointments (that is, the 'waiting list' to get onto the waiting list).

- (4) Since April 1998 the Department of Health has invested \$78 million in reducing the Teaching Hospital clearance time from 10.7 months to the current 4.6 months.

To further reduce the clearance time to 3 months as a once off exercise, the cost would be \$3 million.