

WA COUNTRY HEALTH SERVICE — SILVER CHAIN

917. Ms M.J. DAVIES to the Minister for Health:

I refer to the WA Country Health Service taking over the operation of 11 remote area nursing posts currently managed by Silver Chain.

- (1) How and when will that transition occur?
- (2) Can the minister guarantee that no community will see a reduction in services or operating hours as a result of this transition, and that the level of staffing for in-person services will be maintained or increased?

Ms A. SANDERSON replied:

- (1)–(2) I cannot give the member exact details around timing. What I can tell her is that Silver Chain came to us and handed it over; it did not want to do it anymore. We are in a position in which in order to maintain the service, the WA Country Health Service is going to step in. Like many services across regional and remote Western Australia, they are very expensive to run, but people have a right to access this service. It will be a staged approach around the handover of those sites. I do not have that information in front of me, but it will be a very staged approach. The aim, of course, will be to maintain services. Hopefully, all those staff will want to come over to WACHS, bearing in mind that some of those staff have worked for Silver Chain for some time. It will be their choice about whether they want to come over. The approach we are taking is to maintain that service by filling the gap as the private provider no longer wishes to remain. We will do that with a staged and steady approach.