

## **HEALTH SERVICES, PEEL AND MANDURAH REGIONS**

### *Grievance*

**MR TEMPLEMAN** (Mandurah) [9.23 am]: I acknowledge the comments about growth in the district of Vasse. There has also been tremendous growth in the Peel and Mandurah regions in the past few years. Mandurah is acknowledged as one of the fastest growing cities in Western Australia.

My grievance is to the Minister for Health. It reflects a concern in a rapidly growing area like Mandurah in which health services are very important to the people who have moved there recently and those who have lived there for some time. My grievance concerns a number of statements made recently, including some by the member for Dawesville, that are clearly designed to undermine the public's confidence in local health services in Peel.

Recently, the minister announced a review of the contracts of both the Peel and Joondalup Health Campuses. The minister made clear his views on the review of those contracts in response to questions from the member for Dawesville. A recent press release from the member for Dawesville dated 13 March indicates that he is not listening to the minister. The Government has committed to a major upgrade to the Peel Health Campus at a cost of \$2.4 million. Planning is already under way for that very welcome and badly needed upgrade to the Peel Health Campus. Expansion of the renal dialysis and day surgery centres is very important for the health needs of the people living in the area. These major improvements have been widely welcomed by the people of Mandurah and Peel. They reflect the Government's strong commitment to the Peel region.

I acknowledge the tremendous work of all the people involved in health in the Mandurah and Peel regions, such as the nurses, the allied health professionals, people involved in community health and mental health, and, of course, the doctors, who are very highly regarded in our community.

It is obvious to the people of Mandurah and Peel that that statement from the member for Dawesville was designed to undermine health services and those involved in the delivery of those services in the Peel and Mandurah regions. His comments were unwarranted and have caused more than great concern to people involved in the health industry and people in the community. They were simply cheap political stunts that have no substance. The member would be better served if he were to work together with me to ensure that health services are delivered in the correct way.

**MR KUCERA** (Yokine - Minister for Health) [9.26 am]: I thank the member for Mandurah for raising this issue. It has been of concern to me, particularly in recent weeks when I have read some newspaper reports from the Mandurah and Peel areas. These reports have obviously started a whispering campaign about the Peel Health Campus that is totally unwarranted.

Mandurah is one of my favourite places. I spend a lot of my personal time in that area when I can, as a number of my friends have retired and live in that area. There is an enormous and growing demand for health services in the Peel area because of the area's demographics and the number of retirees. I am pleased to acknowledge the efforts of previous health ministers who had foresight in placing an excellent campus in the area that caters for not only the community but also elderly people.

I agree with the member for Mandurah that the member for Dawesville is continuing to make inappropriate comments. In my previous position I worked closely with the member for Dawesville in that area. He is not a member who ordinarily goes out of his way to undermine the confidence of local residents; however, those comments do not become him. The member for Mandurah was correct when he stated that the Government has already commenced a major upgrade of facilities at the Peel Health Campus that will significantly expand the campus's day surgery and renal dialysis capabilities. They are two very important needs in the area, particularly as it is growing rapidly. These are not the actions of a Government that is allegedly running a campaign against the Peel Health Campus; these are the actions of a Government that is committed to providing a full set of health services to the people of the Mandurah and Peel regions. However, that does not preclude the Government from continuing to ensure that the Peel Health Campus provides services that meet the needs of local residents. Two contracts were entered into by the previous Government, a review of which I recently released in this House. A very narrow, legalistic review was undertaken of both contracts. Whether we like it or not, we will be stuck with them for the next 20 years. If I, as health minister in this State, and the Government did not ensure complete transparency and accountability in the contract arrangements, we would be at fault. In the past 12 months, something has scuttled out from underneath almost every rock in health that the Government has turned over. That is our difficulty. It is the job of a responsible Government to ensure accountability in any public service for whomever that service is provided.

The member for Dawesville's claim that a whisper campaign is being run against the campus has no foundation. The whispers are being spread by him alone. He is the only person who has raised this issue. He is responsible

for it. As I said, he is a good local member, but given his previous track record, he is doing himself no good. He is letting himself and his constituents down. Peel has a good health campus, which operates under a set of open and accountable contracts. It is not productive to take this line. At the end of the day we will ensure that transparency continues.

There are a number of issues surrounding the Peel campus from which the people in Mandurah and Peel generally can take heart. The Government has fulfilled its election commitment to review the contractual arrangements. It was a narrow, legalistic review. It did not investigate the issue of service delivery. Unlike the situation at Joondalup Health Campus, issues had not been raised at Peel and put on the front page of the newspapers until a whisper campaign started down there. I have met with the management of the Peel Health Campus on a number of occasions and I have gone to great lengths to ensure that no aspersions are cast on the management or the service levels there. On the other hand, the Peel campus management has told me clearly what are the demographic needs of the area, particularly in the light of the number of older people who have retired in that region. The people of Peel and Mandurah are satisfied with the way their hospital operates.

Unlike the Joondalup campus and other areas, the Peel campus has a very active community advisory council, which encourages involvement by the community. As I said, at the end of the day, as is the case in all areas in Western Australia, demands on our health services are considerable. However, Peel has an excellent health campus. The member for Dawseville's undermining of those services through a whisper campaign does him no good.