

BREASTSCREEN WA, TAMBELLUP

1569. Hon. M.G. House to the Minister for Health

- (1) Why has a decision has been made to remove the BreastScreen WA mobile service from Tambellup without any consultation with the local community?
- (2) Will the Minister give his commitment to ensuring that the Tambellup community has the opportunity to be fully consulted about the ongoing need for the BreastScreen WA service in the town?
- (3) Will the Minister give his commitment to ensuring that the BreastScreen WA mobile service is retained in Tambellup until the community has been fully consulted about the need for an ongoing mammogram screening service in the town and mechanisms investigated to encourage more women to utilise the service?
- (4) If not, why not?

Mr KUCERA replied:

1. BreastScreen WA has consulted with the community of Tambellup's Shire and the General Manager of the Central Great Southern Health Service regarding mobile service visits. Of particular concern to BreastScreen WA was the number of women in the target age group of 50-69 using the mobile service in Tambellup. A review of attendances showed that during the last visit to Tambellup in August 2000 only 38 women (of whom 26 were in the target age group) attended for a screening mammogram. It appears that the falling attendances are attributable to changing demographics of the region according to data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics. BreastScreen WA has therefore given a great deal of consideration to scheduling further visits to Tambellup and it has been decided that despite the reduction in attendances, the mobile service will again travel to Tambellup this year.
2. After each visit of the mobile service an evaluation of client participation is undertaken. As was the case following the last visit to Tambellup. BreastScreen WA will again consult with the Tambellup Shire and General Manager of the Central Great Southern Health Service following any future visit.
3. The Tambellup Shire, the Cranbrook Shire and the Gnowangerup Shire and all local general practitioners, community health centres and district hospitals have been informed that the falling number of women eligible to be screened has resulted in a need to re-assess the screening schedule. Where the mobile service is not scheduled to visit a particular country town, BreastScreen WA has made an undertaking to provide transport to women to be screened at the nearest centres. BreastScreen WA has actively promoted the service during previous visits. All women in the target age group 50 to 69 who are on the electoral roll or who have previously had a screening mammogram with the BreastScreen WA program receive a personal invitation to attend the mobile service for a mammogram. All doctors and community health centres are advised of the visit well in advance. Advertisements placed in community newspapers and notices are placed in prominent local businesses such as hairdressers, newsagents, pharmacies, Tambellup bowling club and Tambellup community centre. Falling attendances are attributed to the changing demographic for the region rather than a lack of promotion of the service.  
  
As you will appreciate it is important that BreastScreen WA provide a program as efficiently as practicable to all women in both regional and metropolitan areas.
4. Not applicable.