

PERITONECTOMY SURGERY

320. Hon MATT BENSON-LIDHOLM to the minister representing the Minister for Health:

I refer to patients in Western Australia with intra-abdominal cancers who are awaiting potentially life-saving peritonectomy surgery, which the Department of Health stopped performing back in late 2010.

- (1) Can the minister confirm that since the department stopped providing this surgery, Western Australians have had this surgery undertaken in New South Wales, but that state's health department may stop performing this type of surgery on Western Australians because it has received no funding from the Western Australian health department?
- (2) Is the minister aware that a qualified surgeon in Western Australia who has previously performed this surgery is ready, willing and able to perform this type of surgery from Joondalup Health Campus; and, if so, why can this service not be funded from Joondalup?
- (3) What is the status of the 20 Western Australians still awaiting this urgent surgery; will the minister immediately fast-track the approval of this surgery at Joondalup Health Campus; and, if not, why not?

Hon HELEN MORTON replied:

I thank the member for some notice of the question.

- (1) The Department of Health has not stopped this type of surgery because of a lack of funding. Peritonectomy surgery is not currently performed in WA due to the unavailability of a trained surgeon credentialled to provide the service.
- (2) Yes. A local trained surgeon was previously willing to undertake this service from Joondalup Health Campus. This surgery should be carried out at a tertiary hospital. Discussions were underway to explore how this service could be provided at a public tertiary hospital. Unfortunately, due to personal reasons, the surgeon involved in the discussions is now no longer available to provide this service.
- (3) Western Australians who require this treatment are currently treated at St George Hospital in Sydney, as has been the case in the past. Costs for the patient travel to Sydney are met by the Department of Health. Discussions are continuing with the expert surgeon in Sydney, and others are continuing to arrange for the surgery to be available in a metropolitan tertiary hospital in the future.