

PATIENT ASSISTED TRAVEL SCHEME

**814. Ms M.J. DAVIES to the Minister for Health:**

I have a supplementary question. Sorry, minister, that was a little bit lost in the goings-on in the chamber just then. I note that the minister said that the government is ready to start the investment cycle again, so can he please clarify: will the government consider increasing the PATS subsidy to support regional people who are forced to travel to access medical treatment away from their home; and, if so, when?

**Mr R.H. COOK replied:**

We will continue to look at the PATS and I welcome any members, particularly Labor country members, to continue to talk to me about these issues. I would welcome their —

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Members!

**Mr R.H. COOK:** I am reminded of the investments that we are currently making at the Kalgoorlie hospital, to put a magnetic resonance imaging machine in that facility, saving 1 200 patients a year the trouble of having to travel to Perth. I am also reminded of the radiotherapy bunker that we are currently installing at the Albany Health Campus—again, another opportunity to continue to drive high-level care for WA country patients, so they do not have to leave the communities in which they live—as well as \$11 million we have invested at Bunbury Hospital, to continue the upgrades there. I will continue to look at the PATS to make sure that it provides an adequate subsidy for WA patients, and WA patients can have confidence that we, more than any other government, are investing in country hospitals so that we save them those precious miles that they would otherwise have to travel.