

WA COUNTRY HEALTH SERVICE — FINANCE STAFF RELOCATIONS

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

I refer to the minister's decision to centralise regional WA Country Health Service finance staff.

- (1) How many positions will be relocated from within WACHS in the Kimberley, the Pilbara, the midwest, the wheatbelt, the great southern and goldfields regions into two hubs in Bunbury and Perth?
- (2) When did the minister make this substantial change to the organisational structure of WACHS finance?

Mr R.H. COOK replied:

- (1)–(2) I thank the member for the question. Obviously, we will have an opportunity to delve into the detail of this in the matter of public interest this afternoon. I am looking forward to that debate.

In relation to the details that the member was asking for, the change will affect a number of existing WACHS financial accounting staff with 25 jobs moving from the regions to Bunbury and 13 jobs moving from the regions to Perth. All staff will be offered the opportunity to move to these hubs or will be provided with support for redeployment to alternative positions within WACHS. No staff member will be left without a job as a result of the decision that was made. In addition, there will be the creation of an extra seven regional business analyst positions, which will reconfigure the financial aspects of the organisation from an inward transaction focused area to an outward business efficiency area. The member has asked me when the decision was made about this. It was an extent from a study undertaken by PricewaterhouseCoopers in 2012, which made recommendations to the government in terms of the way WACHS reconfigures its financial services. Those recommendations were captured —

Mr R.S. Love: Did you ask the member for Albany?

The SPEAKER: Member for Moore, you will be hearing from the member for Albany in a moment.

Mr R.H. COOK: Those recommendations were captured in the WACHS strategic plan 2015–2018. It was a plan that was put before the minister of the day. That minister was not me. In addition, the decision to move the staff was taken by the board of WACHS in 2016.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Mr R.H. COOK: I understand that all government departments have to strive for efficiency, particularly in health because we want to make the health system more efficient so that we can employ more doctors, more nurses and more allied health staff—more people on the front line. The fact of the matter is that if members of the National Party are looking for someone to blame for this decision, they should look across the aisle at our friends over here in the Liberal Party. I understand that National Party attendance at cabinet meetings was a somewhat infrequent affair. I understand that it was not completely engaged in the process of government —

Mrs L.M. Harvey interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Scarborough, I call you to order for the first time.

Mr R.H. COOK: It ran its own budgets and did not have to talk to its coalition partner in relation to the way it spent royalties for regions.

Mr V.A. Catania interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for North West Central!

Mr R.H. COOK: The fact of the matter is that this is part of a broader efficiency drive within the department. It all started with members opposite.