

MENTAL HEALTH ACT, REVIEW, IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS

2566. Mr M.G. House to the Minister for Health

- (1) I refer to the recent *Mental Health Act 1996* review commissioned by the Government and carried out by the Department of Health, and the consequential recommendations to -
- (a) avoid unnecessary patient transfers to Perth;
  - (b) improve access to services in remote areas including the Kimberley by entering into a service agreement with the Northern Territory;
  - (c) improve legislative support for telepsychiatry and telemedicine;
  - (d) strengthen the role of the Chief Psychiatrist;
  - (e) revise the meaning of 'mental illness';
  - (f) increase the rights of involuntary patients to exercise informed consent to treatment;
  - (g) authorise rural nurses to administer psychiatric medication under certain circumstances;
  - (h) detain a voluntary patient with dementia;
  - (i) improve the role of the COP (Council of Official Visitors) as advocates for the rights of people with mental illness;
  - (j) give involuntary patients the right to vote; and
  - (k) establish a new part to the Act that deals specifically with minors,
- and ask will the Minister advise -
- (i) which of these recommendations have already been implemented;
  - (ii) which of these recommendations the Government intends to implement;
  - (iii) which of these recommendations the Government will not be implementing; and
  - (iv) on what basis were these specific recommendations rejected?
- (2) I refer to the recent *Mental Health Act 1996* review commissioned by the Government and carried out by the Department of Health and ask will the Minister advise whether he intends to retain the services of the Mental Health Review Board for future reviews of Mental Health in Western Australia?
- (3) I refer to the Government's pre-election promises on mental health, which included the provision of -
- (a) an additional \$10 million for mental health services over the first term of Government;
  - (b) \$8 million for a comprehensive health improvement program to be administered by the Public Health Division of the Health Department;
  - (c) \$400,000 over 4 years for awareness and prevention programs that target school based services;
  - (d) improving existing patient facilities to prevent children's admission to adult wards;
  - (e) \$3.2 million over 4 years to expand outreach services that offer an alternative to hospitalisation;
  - (f) holding the decision to close Selby Clinic;
  - (g) \$1.6 million for improved counselling services for families;
  - (h) \$1 million to carers in regional/rural Western Australia;
  - (i) \$380,000 over 4 years to expand and evaluate counselling/support services for parents;
  - (j) \$4 million over 4 years to increase availability of independent living accommodation; and
  - (k) \$500,000 in capital works funding for Whitby Falls property,
- and ask will the Minister advise which of these election promises -
- (i) has been carried out in full; and
  - (ii) has been abandoned, and why?

Mr J.A. McGINTY replied:

- (1) (a)-(k) The recommendations from the Review of the Mental Health Act 1996 (MHA) are currently under consideration. As required by section 215 of the MHA, a report will be laid before each House of Parliament, as soon as is practicable.

- (2) The State Administrative Tribunal (Conferral of Jurisdiction) Amendment and Repeal Bill 2003 (SAT) lays out a process whereby the role of the Mental Health Review Board will be incorporated into SAT. This will in no way affect the right to a review by an involuntary patient or the process of conducting a review.
- (3) (a) Implementation is progressing, with the detail of individual election commitments outlined below.
- (b) This program is still ongoing and active. It will conclude on 30 June 2004.
- (c) This initiative is being implemented and will be completed in 2004/05.
- (d) The initiative to address this issue has commenced with an initial planning process.
- (e) Implementation is planned for 2004/05.
- (f) The construction of the new facility at the Selby Clinic site is due for completion by the end of August 2004.
- (g) This is a multiple year initiative which commenced in 2003.
- (h) This is a multiple year initiative which commenced in 2003.
- (i) The Children of Parents with a Mental Illness strategy commenced in 2003 and full implementation is planned for 2004/05.
- (j) This initiative commenced in 2002/03 and full implementation is expected by 2005/06.
- (k) Completion of the construction of the Whitby Falls group homes is expected mid 2005.