

PATIENT ASSISTED TRAVEL SCHEME, ADMINISTRATION TRANSFER

434. Hon BARRY HOUSE to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Health:

- (1) Has the administration of the patient assisted travel scheme -

Hon Ken Travers: You need only look at your budget.

Hon BARRY HOUSE: No wonder Hon Travers cannot get a job.

- (1) Has the administration of the patient assisted travel scheme been transferred from local south west hospitals to Leederville?
- (2) Has this change been made only for the South West Area Health Service and, if so, why?
- (3) What are the reasons for centralising the service?
- (4) How will these changes enhance customer service?
- (5) Will this involve the re-allocation of employment to Perth?
- (6) What costs or savings are associated with these changes?

Hon SUE ELLERY replied:

- (1) Yes. The patient assisted travel scheme is administered by the South West Area Health Service utilising the services of a call-centre operator, McKesson Asia-Pacific, based in Leederville.
- (2)-(4) The South West Area Health Service decision to centralise the service in Leederville was made to provide a better service. Consumers are now able to complete their application over the phone with the assistance of a call-service representative. Additional benefits include reduced stress and confusion in completing forms, immediate assessment of eligibility under the PAT scheme, immediate assistance with travel and accommodation arrangements if required, immediate assessment of financial assistance requests when required, reduced delays in making payments to consumers through the offer of electronic funds deposits to their accounts, reduced time in registering for subsequent PAT visits, as the details are available from the previous application.
- (5) There is no re-allocation of employment to Perth. All South West Area Health Service employees previously involved in supporting the PAT scheme have been redeployed.
- (6) It is anticipated there will be a reduction in costs for the PAT scheme, with a high level of service being provided to customers. Full costs and benefits of the arrangements are being evaluated but will be relevant only for comparison purposes after a reasonable assessment of usage.