

JUNE O'CONNOR CENTRE — CLOSURE

837. Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN to the Minister for Mental Health:

- (1) Is the minister aware that the June O'Connor Centre, which operates in Mandurah and currently provides services to 155 clients, will close by the end of November unless urgent ongoing funding by the minister's department is provided?
- (2) What will the Minister for Mental Health do to prevent this service closing and to ensure mental health services are provided to the people of Mandurah and the Peel region into the future and maintained?
- (3) In light of this and other cutbacks, does the minister deny that he is cutting front-line mental health services?
- (4) Why does the minister not just tell the truth about his mental health cuts?

Dr G.G. JACOBS replied:

Recently I attended the Rockingham June O'Connor Centre to recognise the great work it does in supporting people in the community. The member for Rockingham was also there, and it was a good day. It is a service that the government recognises is important in supporting people in the community with mental illness.

- (1)-(4) The Mandurah June O'Connor Centre is under consideration by this government. I met June O'Connor on that day. She talked to me about the centre, and we are having further discussions about funding for the very good service the centre provides in a home environment to support people with mental illness.

This government is committed to supporting people with mental illness. As I have said before in this house, we do quite well treating people with acute illness, but what do we do to prevent people with acute illness needing to go to hospital, and how do we support them in the community so that they do not have to go to hospital for acute health care? Obviously, when they go to hospital, we have the services for them. I have previously made this statement in this place. The government would not have gone to the trouble of establishing a portfolio for mental health, with all the things it is doing to make it operational and to deliver services for people with mental illness in the community, if it were not committed to supporting people with mental illness.

Mr R.H. Cook interjected.

Dr G.G. JACOBS: The member for Kwinana keeps on bringing subjects to this house with half the story. He gets pinches of information—only half the information—and then comes in here —

Point of Order

Mr M. McGOWAN: We have limited time and the Minister for Mental Health has now taken a number of minutes. The question related to the Mandurah June O'Connor Centre. On the basis of standing order 78, I ask that the minister be brought back to that question.

The SPEAKER: I will not take the point of order. However, if members to my left and to my right would cease to interject, I am sure that members in this place would have more opportunity to ask questions and to get answers. Minister, it is a short amount of time and I ask you to make a rapid conclusion to your answer.

Questions without Notice Resumed

Dr G.G. JACOBS: Thank you for that direction, Mr Speaker. This government is committed to supporting people in the community. I am meeting with June O'Connor and I thank the member for Mandurah for communicating on this matter. I will meet with June O'Connor and the committee in pursuit of our passion and compassion in delivering community services for people with mental illness.

Dr K.D. Hames: Good answer!

Mr D.A. Templeman: Why isn't the Minister for Health standing up for the people of Mandurah? He is not doing it. He has done nothing, and he knows it!

The SPEAKER: Member for Mandurah, we just heard a point of order from the member for Rockingham about time being wasted in this house, whether you believe it or not. I formally call you for the second time.