

MANDURAH — DIAGNOSTIC MAMMOGRAM SERVICES

623. Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN to the Minister for Health:

The Minister for Education thought this question would be to her, but it is not. I refer to the decision by Global Health services in Mandurah to shut down its diagnostic mammogram service at Peel Health Campus due to reduced rebates under the capital sensitivity scheme —

- (1) Is it state government policy that Mandurah women should no longer have access to local diagnostic mammograms?
- (2) What has the Minister for Health done to rectify this situation so that local women can again access the service in Mandurah?
- (3) If Global Health services has done this in Mandurah, does this affect any other public health services in the metropolitan and rural areas of Western Australia?

Dr K.D. HAMES replied:

- (1)–(3) A mammogram screening program occurs through a bus in the Peel region. The bus spends approximately one year in Mandurah and then for the next year—given that women have to have routine mammograms approximately every two years—it tours the region and then comes back. It is coming back to Mandurah soon. I wrote to the member for Mandurah in the last few days to give him the date, but I think it is 8 or 10 October.

Mr D.A. Templeman: I am not asking about the BreastScreen bus, I am asking about the diagnostic mammogram service —

Dr K.D. HAMES: An answer is a progressive thing; it starts at the beginning, it has a middle and it ends with a conclusion. I am still at the beginning! The beginning of the answer is that there is a mammography screening program for routine mammography in Mandurah. Starting 8 or 10 October—I forget the exact date—women can go and have their routine mammography screen.

This is the middle. If something is discovered at that mammography screen, they need to go and have further mammography done. In the past a machine at Global Diagnostics in Mandurah has been able to do those mammographies. Alternatively, people have been able to go to Rockingham or Perth, largely Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital, to have that further screening. In recent times Global Diagnostics has formed the view that its machine is getting older, that it is not the latest in technology. It is currently looking at the option of changing it to a modern machine that will be able to do the latest, up-to-date imaging that can possibly be done. It is not at that stage as it is. Global Diagnostics is the organisation that operates in Mandurah. It does contract work for government. Currently, people who have an abnormality diagnosed in Mandurah need to go to Rockingham hospital. As members know, it is only half an hour's drive.

Mr D.A. Templeman: It should be happening in Mandurah.

Dr K.D. HAMES: It should and it will.

Mr D.A. Templeman interjected.

The SPEAKER: The member for Mandurah!

Dr K.D. HAMES: We, as in the Department of Health in discussion with me, have had discussions with Global Diagnostics about when it expects to get the new machine it is talking about so that it will do the tests in Mandurah. Given that this has only occurred in recent weeks, we are not in a position yet to give an answer. My hope is that in the relatively near future that will occur, given that patients now have to travel half an hour to Rockingham, and given that this is a very significant problem. Often someone has been found to have a questionable mammogram during a routine mammography. Sometimes it will turn out to be nothing other than a simple cyst, but other times it is cancer. It is critical that people get first-class, expert care. For anyone living in Mandurah who has a suspicious lump, there is absolutely nothing wrong with a half-hour drive. If they have a suspicion of breast cancer, while we are waiting for the latest and best machine to come to Global Diagnostics —

Mr D.A. Templeman interjected.

Dr K.D. HAMES: It is a private company; it is not government-run.

Mr D.A. Templeman interjected.

Dr K.D. HAMES: It is half an hour away.

Mr D.A. Templeman interjected.

Dr K.D. HAMES: Why does any area that is away —

Mr D.A. Templeman interjected.

Dr K.D. HAMES: When we have to send patients—this is the end —

Mr D.A. Templeman interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Mandurah, if you want to ask a supplementary question, that is something I will give you the opportunity to do.

Mr D.A. Templeman: I will.

The SPEAKER: I am glad.