

HEALTH SERVICES — SOUTH WEST — ADDITIONAL FUNDING

**547. Mr D.T. PUNCH to the Minister for Health:**

I refer to the McGowan Labor government's \$5.5 billion WA recovery plan, which includes a massive investment in our health system. Can the minister outline to the house what this government's additional funding for the Bunbury hospital redevelopment will mean for the delivery of health care in the south west and can the minister advise the house what this and other upgrades to hospitals across WA will mean for local jobs and local businesses?

**Mr R.H. COOK replied:**

I thank the member for the question. The member for Bunbury never stops advocating for his community. It was great to be with him at Bunbury hospital the other day when we announced a further \$38 million towards the redevelopment of Bunbury hospital. This is additional funding to help facilitate the next stage of works at this, our busiest hospital in our country hospital system.

Bunbury hospital services more than 170 000 south west residents in addition to the seasonal tourists who impact on that hospital. It is doing a great job, but the size of the hospital means that it is now no longer fit for purpose, and so we are getting on with the job of continuing to expand it. The additional funding will help facilitate the next stage of work. The state government reaffirms its commitment that we want to make sure that people can receive the care they need where they live and when they need it.

This renewed funding comes on top of the \$22.8 million already earmarked for that project and brings the total investment in the South West Health Campus to \$60.8 million to ensure that it grows with the thriving community of Bunbury and its hinterland. The \$22.8 million that is already earmarked will see a focus on service planning and development in addition to the construction of an additional operating theatre; the reconfiguration of the emergency department fast-track area; the establishment of an acute medical assessment unit; the implementation of a mental health observation area; the procurement of extra clinical equipment for the intensive care unit; and improved hospital-in-the-home and telehealth capability at community locations, a project that is already underway. A lot of the member's constituents will be most interested in the increase of about 250 parking bays on that site. I give the community of Bunbury and the south west their due; they know how to creatively park when they need to when using the parking bays at that hospital.

It is great to bring this extra funding to bear. Of course, we are expecting a lot of local jobs to come out of these early projects, which will see a bonanza in local jobs over the summer months. This comes in addition to a range of important upgrades and funding announcements that we made recently, including the upgrade to Collie Hospital and, as part of the project definition, the consideration of options for the design of a new operating theatre complex at that hospital. A community reference group is in place looking at the imminent expansion of the operating theatre there. People in the member for Balcatta's electorate will have seen the ongoing construction of the maternity assessment unit as well as the therapy hub and the rehabilitation ward. Those upgrades are well and truly underway. The member for Geraldton will look on with great fondness at the terrific work of the McGowan Labor government as we turn the sod on 4 June to commence the redevelopment of Geraldton Health Campus.

We announced the early works for the expansion of Joondalup Health Campus, which will see the administration area moved as part of the expansion of the emergency department at that hospital. We also announced the expansion of the Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital emergency department, which will see a new eight-bed behaviour assessment unit brought into that hospital in addition to the changes we brought in at the time of COVID-19 for new negative pressure rooms at that hospital's emergency department. The Royal Perth Hospital medihotel has reached practical completion and we have seen some great works by a local construction firm, creating more jobs.

The \$80 million maintenance package for our entire hospital sector right across the state will see an exceptional level of work undertaken right across all hospitals—country, regional and metropolitan—to ensure that we get the maximum capacity to get people back into the workforce. The expansion of our hospitals via this funding is very welcome and it is great to see ongoing investment in our hospital system.