

ALBANY REGIONAL HOSPITAL, CHILDREN'S WARDS

**495. Hon BOB THOMAS to the Attorney General representing the Minister for Health:**

- (1) Can the Attorney General confirm that Albany Regional Hospital is again accommodating adults in children's wards?
- (2) Can the Attorney General table information on how many occasions this has occurred in the last and current financial years?
- (3) On how many occasions have patients been transferred to surrounding hospitals?
- (4) Is the hospital subject to further cost cutting; and if yes, what?
- (5) Can the Attorney General confirm that the hospital's general manager is in financial negotiations with the Health Department; and if yes, what is the subject of those negotiations?

**Hon PETER FOSS replied:**

I thank the member for some notice of this question.

- (1) Yes. However, adults are never accommodated in the same room in the ward with children. The admission of adult patients to the children's ward is controlled and monitored, and ensures that the available resources are used to best meet the needs of the community.
- (2) Detailed records are available only for the past three months. In that period the ward was used on all but three days to accommodate at least one adult patient.
- (3) Patients from Denmark and Mt Barker who are admitted to Albany Regional Hospital are often transferred back to their local hospital when their condition allows and when this is required. In the five-month period ended 21 November 2000, 13 people were transferred to Mt Barker Plantaganet District Hospital and 22 people were transferred to Denmark District Hospital.
- (4) The Health Department of Western Australia has already determined the budget for the Lower Great Southern Health Service and it does not intend to reduce this amount.
- (5) Yes. The Health Department of WA and the health service general manager are negotiating over the necessity to provide additional funds to the health service in order to ensure services are maintained to meet the needs of the community.