

QUEEN ELIZABETH II MEDICAL CENTRE — SATELLITE BIRTHING FACILITY

931. Ms L. METTAM to the Minister for Health:

I refer to the minister's thought bubble for a proposed satellite maternity facility, together with an expanded Osborne Park Hospital, to support the minister's disastrous decision to relocate the new women's and babies' hospital to the Murdoch site. How can the minister possibly staff three different facilities, given the neonatal unit at Osborne Park Hospital, which opened in 2020, is still not able to operate as intended due to an inability to attract suitably qualified staff?

Distinguished Visitor — Hon Bob Kucera

The SPEAKER: I might just welcome former minister Bob Kucera to the public gallery.

Questions without Notice Resumed

Ms A. SANDERSON replied:

I think the Leader of the Liberal Party finds herself in a very difficult position with this hospital. Essentially, the government was faced with a series of irrefutable facts and unmitigatable risk. Any sensible and responsible government would not accept those risks, which could not be mitigated, on behalf of the community. We absolutely made the sensible and appropriate decision to relocate the acute services part of the tertiary hospital down to Murdoch and expand Osborne Park Hospital.

The question that the Leader of the Liberal Party asks ignores the fact that Osborne Park Hospital will have a doubling of activity under the plan and, therefore, a doubling of its requirement for staff and a doubling of its requirement for specialty staff because King Edward Memorial Hospital for Women will not be operating. She assumes that we will still be maintaining King Edward. Many of those staff will relocate to Osborne Park Hospital and some of those staff will relocate down to Murdoch, and the Fiona Stanley Hospital staff will relocate. We are not tripling the staffing profile of the maternity system.

I have been very frustrated with the Leader of the Liberal Party's unwillingness to address or understand the facts of the case. I thought that, surely, anyone faced with the business case that this government was faced with would just need to read it and accept that it was a difficult but necessary decision, so we released the business case. Knowing all those risks, she still dug in and said, "No. I will still build it there." Okay, I said I would organise for her to meet with clinicians, go to the site and make the offer. I organised those meetings. The Leader of the Liberal Party went down to Fiona Stanley. We would assume that she would ask the question about the relocation, but she did not ask a single question about the relocation of those clinicians. She did not ask a single question! Again, I said, "Go down to Osborne Park. I will make it available. I will make the executive and the director general available. We will brief you and give you the information because this should be in the interests of everyone." She did not ask a single question.

Ms L. Mettam interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order, please! I am guessing that you might like the opportunity for a supplementary.

Ms A. SANDERSON: Again, she did not ask a reasonable question at all. She does not ask the questions because she does not want the answers. She does not want the answers when she gets out and talks to those clinicians at those sites—Fiona Stanley, the Child and Adolescent Health Service, many in King Edward and the midwifery staff. Did she talk to the midwifery staff? No! I bet she has not. The midwifery staff and the Osborne Park staff will say that this is the sensible and responsible decision.