

GERALDTON HEALTH CAMPUS — REDEVELOPMENT

340. Ms L. DALTON to the Minister for Health:

I refer to the McGowan Labor government's commitment to redeveloping Geraldton Health Campus and delivering the single biggest investment in this facility since that made by the Gallop Labor government in the early 2000s.

- (1) Can the minister outline to the house how the additional \$49 million announced in the state budget will ensure that the hospital continues to meet the needs of the local community into the future?
- (2) Can the minister advise the house of what new services will be delivered as part of the hospital expansion?

Ms A. SANDERSON replied:

- (1)–(2) I thank the member for Geraldton for her question and for her long-term advocacy for the redevelopment of this health campus. It is an important strategic health campus for the midwest region and this government is very pleased to announce an extra \$49.4 million to bring to \$122 million the entire appropriation for the project to redevelop this campus. We are absolutely committed to delivering for the people of the midwest, and I can say that they have no better advocate than the member for Geraldton.

This was committed to in 2017, before we were elected to government, and stage 1 of the project was delivered in June last year. The remaining stages of the precinct have been delayed due to significant building and construction shortages, both labour and material. A lot of this was exacerbated by cyclone Seroja and the priority for the region is to allow those people to rebuild their residential homes and to use all the might of the building and construction sector to rebuild their homes and their lives. But we are very pleased to announce that an extra \$49 million has been invested to see this project to completion. Since it was the originally costed, we have seen a significant increase in delivering building projects, particularly in regional areas.

This is part of the largest infrastructure program across the state, and it is the largest infrastructure program that the public health system has ever seen. The redevelopment will be incredibly important and will expand services at the health campus, importantly. There will be a bigger emergency department. I went there recently and met with a lot of fantastic and very excited staff, including an emergency department registered nurse who was delighted and relieved to see that the project had been given extra funding. There will be a new intensive care unit co-located with an expanded high-dependency unit. That is important for attracting and retaining staff who want to train and stay in their regional towns. They do not have to leave to increase their competency and expand into intensivism.

Importantly, there will be a 12-bed acute mental health unit, which will be a game changer for mental health in the midwest. People currently have to travel to Perth to seek acute mental health treatment, so this is very, very important. It is not since the Gallop government that Geraldton has seen this kind of investment. It takes a Labor member and a Labor government to deliver this commitment.

Several members interjected.

Ms A. SANDERSON: In the many, many years of the previous government, and with the billions of dollars from royalties for regions, it did nothing.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order, please, members!

Ms A. SANDERSON: The only contribution that the Nationals WA has made to Geraldton was to provide a very questionable candidate, who was previously in the upper house, to run in that seat—a very questionable individual and candidate. Frankly, it brought embarrassment to Geraldton. The previous government provided no investment in that local hospital. This is significant investment in regional health care. In this budget alone, there is \$158 million across regional health care.

Mr R.S. Love interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order, please!

Ms A. SANDERSON: I will tell the member for Moore what we are doing: we are making the full commitment to Geraldton with \$122 million, not half a commitment to Geraldton like Melissa Price has made.

The SPEAKER: The member for Vasse with the last question.