

HEALTH - DELIVERY OF POST-ACUTE CARE - TRANSFER OF SERVICE PROVIDER

4444. Hon Murray Criddle to the Minister representing the Minister for Health

I refer to the decision to discontinue the purchase of post-acute care through Silver Chain and transfer the service to the Western Australian Country Health Service (WACHS), and I ask -

- (1) Please detail the reasons for the switch to WACHS?
- (2) Why was this decision taken against the strong recommendation of Health Department director general Neale Fong, that Silver Chain continue to provide post-acute care in the regions?
- (3) What is your response to claims that patients seeking post-acute care are being advised that the service is either unavailable, only available when presenting to the local hospital or that they are now ineligible for the service?
- (4) Can the Minister please provide the following statistics -
  - (a) the number of patients delivered post-acute care by Silver Chain for each of the following periods -
    - (i) 2002-2003;
    - (ii) 2004-2005; and
    - (iii) 2005-2006;
  - (b) patients delivered post-acute care by Silver Chain on a monthly basis over the past 12 months; and
  - (c) patients delivered post-acute care by the WACHS on a monthly basis since the service was transferred?

Hon SUE ELLERY replied:

1. For several years, the Silver Chain Nursing Association (SCNA) chose to provide post acute services for country patients using funding received from the Department of Health (DOH) specifically for the Home and Community Care (HACC) program. The DOH has requested for some time that SCNA cease doing this, as it is not in the scope of the funding contract. The contract is for the provision of HACC services.
2. This is incorrect. The SCNA contract with the DOH is not for the provision of post acute services, but for the provision of HACC services.
3. There has been no loss of post acute services, as these are being provided directly by the local health services.

The State Government is adding to the range of services available outside hospitals and in people's homes through its Ambulatory Care Program. In the first instance, this program will support an extension of Hospital in the Home (HITH) services to those living in regional centres such as Albany, Bunbury and Geraldton. In the Pilbara and Kimberley all patients requiring post acute care have always been cared for directly by WACHS nursing staff.
- 4a. The number of patients delivered post acute care by SCNA in the country in each of the last four years was:

2002/03: 474  
2003/04: 553  
2004/05: 774  
2005/06: 526
- 4b. The number of patients delivered post acute care by SCNA in the country on a monthly basis for 2005/06 was:

July 2005: 76  
Aug 2005: 75  
Sep 2005: 58  
Oct 2005: 30  
Nov 2005: 31  
Dec 2005: 30  
Jan 2006: 31  
Feb 2006: 30  
March 2006: 31

April 2006: 30  
May 2006: 29  
June 2006: 75

- 4c. WACHS has provided domiciliary services to patients following their discharge from hospital for many years. These services are not provided exclusively to post acute care patients, the number of which is not separately recorded. The number of patients delivered post acute care by WACHS on a monthly basis is therefore not available.