

WOMEN'S AND BABIES' HOSPITAL

624. Mrs R.M.J. CLARKE to the Minister for Health:

I refer to the McGowan Labor government's record investment into Western Australia's health system, including the delivery of new and upgraded hospital infrastructure.

- (1) Can the minister update the house on the work underway in planning for the new women's and babies' hospital?
- (2) Can the minister outline to the house how the community can provide feedback into the process to ensure that the hospital truly delivers patient-centred care?

Ms A. SANDERSON replied:

I thank the member for her question. I know that she is also passionate about delivering patient-centred care, particularly in the area of women's health.

- (1)–(2) The new women's and babies' hospital presents us with a fantastic opportunity. It is already the result of the good financial management of this government that we are able to put aside \$1.8 billion towards this project to replace the ageing but much loved King Edward Memorial Hospital for women and newborns in this state. It presents us with a unique opportunity to rethink how we deliver maternity care in Western Australia. It is much more than just a hospital. It is also an opportunity to rethink that and it is a very symbolic and important opportunity for women and the people who work in women's health care and maternity care to really engage in this process.

Western Australia has some of the highest rates of intervention in childbirth in the country. In fact, even by international standards those intervention rates are high. Rates of postnatal depression are rising and some studies report that as many as one in three women report significant trauma from a number of those birth interventions. We want women to have the birth that they want, and we want them to be able to deliver safely. We have a once-in-a-generation opportunity to engage with the women who have used the maternity services and who will use our new women's hospital and ask them what they want to see change or stay the same. We know that childbirth is a unique experience for women. Generally, women do not get to do it many times in their life and we want that experience to be as good as it possibly can be for all women in Western Australia, so we need to hear from women in WA.

Yesterday, I launched the expressions of interest process for community members so that they can be involved in consumer focus groups that will inform the various elements of the women's and newborns' hospital. When it comes to this hospital, women are the most important part of this process and will be the patients who use it. Since yesterday, we have already received more than 350 expressions of interest. That is fantastic. People who want to apply can do so via the new women's and babies' hospital website. The application takes 10 minutes and EOIs will close on 11 November. Participants will be short-listed and contacted after that date. The focus groups will take place in November and December this year. This will not be the only way that people can have their say on the women's project. People will be able to engage through a range of mechanisms, forums and processes. We want to hear how the design and fit-out elements can improve patient and family experiences and how we can make the new hospital appropriately accessible to everyone. We want to know about disability access, the naming of wards, what the public and religious spaces in the hospital will look like, what the landscaping will look like and what sort of sustainability initiatives we need to see in this hospital.

It is a priority for me to ensure patient-centred care at the heart of this new women's and newborns' hospital and the McGowan government is very committed to maternity services in WA. I am a strong advocate for birth choices and for expanding birth choices for Western Australian women and I am very excited, as Minister for Health, to be part of this stage of this project.