

WOMEN'S HEALTH AND SEXUAL ASSAULT REFERRAL SERVICES — FUNDING

**64. Ms R. SAFFIOTI to the Minister for Health:**

I refer to the network of women's health services and sexual assault referral services that provide crucial community health services to women across Western Australia.

- (1) Can the minister advise whether funding for these services will be provided beyond June 2011?
- (2) Can he confirm that 12 women's health services and four sexual assault referral services have been advised that they will not receive consumer price index funding increases in their annual funding for 2009–10?
- (3) Does the minister agree that this represents a real cut in funding for these services of between three and four per cent?
- (4) Will he explain to the house why these cuts have been implemented and how many people he estimates will be turned away from these services as a result of these cuts?

**Dr K.D. HAMES replied:**

- (1)–(4) I do not have any knowledge of the particular groups that the member has referred to. They all come under the area of non-government organisation funding. The state government provides a large amount of funding to non-government organisations, some of which provide those services. When we went through the funding for the 2009–10 year, to the best of my knowledge all those NGO groups received CPI increases; in fact, some groups received significantly more than CPI increases. Specifically, those groups were for cystic fibrosis, motor neurone disease and muscular dystrophy. Those groups received extra funding. One particular group responsible for sexual health, which is in the member for Nollamara's electorate, received a small increase in funding beyond that, but the rest, as far as I know, received CPI increases for the 2009–10 year. I have not yet considered the funding round for the following year. That will come to me in the lead-up to the budget deliberations, and I will consider those as they come forward. I have no intention of reducing funding to sexual health centres. Why would I? It is a critical component of care within those communities. If the member for West Swan has evidence—I presume that she does, otherwise she would not have asked the question in the first place—I ask her to bring it to me and I will make inquiries about why that information would have been given out. I, for one, do not accept that that is reasonable.