

WOMEN'S AND BABIES' HOSPITAL — RELOCATION

870. Mr D.A.E. SCAIFE to the Minister for Health:

I refer to the delivery of world-class health services by clinicians working at Fiona Stanley Hospital.

- (1) What does it mean for women and babies in my community to have maternity, neonatology and paediatric services available at Fiona Stanley Hospital?
- (2) Can the minister advise the house how this government's appreciation for clinicians working at Fiona Stanley Hospital compares with those in the opposition?

Ms A. SANDERSON replied:

- (1)–(2) I thank the member for Cockburn for his question. We know that no doubt the decision to relocate the new women's and babies' hospital to Murdoch alongside Fiona Stanley Hospital came as a surprise to the community and the health sector. We accept that. What we cannot accept, and what I cannot accept as minister, is the undeniable risks proposed with continuing to build on the Queen Elizabeth II Medical Centre site. The business case, the Infrastructure WA review and advice from the director general all present irrefutable evidence that to build another tertiary hospital on the QEII site would pose an acceptable and unmitigatable risk to services, to the delivery of critical services, and to access for patients and staff to Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital and Perth Children's Hospital for up to 20 years. The only responsible decision that the government could make is to build the hospital alongside Fiona Stanley Hospital. There are many, many advantages to this approach. Women and babies coming from regional WA via the Royal Flying Doctor Service will have very fast access to emergency care and have quicker and safer access when they land at Jandakot and can go straight into adult tertiary intensive care unit services at Fiona Stanley Hospital. Importantly, women who are critically unwell following childbirth will have immediate access to expert ICU access next door at Fiona Stanley Hospital. That is not currently the case. Women at King Edward Memorial Hospital for Women currently have no access to expert ICU onsite or co-located. They are not served well under the current arrangements and they cannot wait longer. They are transferred from King Edward to Charlies under the current arrangements.

Fiona Stanley Hospital is also home to the only paediatric emergency department outside Perth Children's Hospital in Western Australia. The team at Fiona Stanley Hospital have experience in dealing with paediatric emergencies and we have an opportunity to expand these services further. Fiona Stanley Hospital is already going above and beyond in paediatric care and is already working as a level 5 paediatric service. That means access to 24/7 on-call medical and surgery paediatric services, access to specialist paediatric allied health services and support services. They are going through the accreditation process to now get this formally recognised.

A senior Fiona Stanley Hospital paediatric clinician wrote to me and stated —

FSH already provides a range of paediatric services on site including surgery, neurology, feeding team, gastroenterology, endocrinology, respiratory, child protection, metabolic, and nephrology. Expansion of some of these subspecialties will support not only the NICU at the new Women and Babies Hospital at Murdoch but also the paediatric patients from South metro, avoiding their travel to PCH. This will be a huge step forward for '*care closer to home*' for the large population in South Metro, East Metro and country area health services.

Tabling of Paper

Ms L. METTAM: I request that the minister table what appears to be an official document.

The SPEAKER: Minister, I can see highlighting and pen marks from here, but is it an official document?

Ms A. SANDERSON: It is a quote from a letter that I received in my office embedded in the answer.

The SPEAKER: It is transcribed there. There is no requirement to table it.

Questions without Notice Resumed

Ms A. SANDERSON: The expansion of paediatric services at Fiona Stanley Hospital will mean more trained paediatric staff, from consultants to nurses to allied health. The neonatology experts at Fiona Stanley Hospital are world class. When the hospital opened nearly 10 years ago, it was suggested that it would not be safe to have specialist neonatology services delivered to Fiona Stanley and that we would not be able to recruit highly trained clinicians. These claims have proven to be baseless, yet the Leader of the Liberal Party continues to recklessly claim that women and families will somehow receive a second-class service at the Murdoch site. The Leader of the Liberal Party has shown complete disregard for the facts, advice from infrastructure experts and the expertise of highly regarded clinicians who live and work outside Nedlands and Subiaco. She says that any decision that she makes would

be based on taking into account the best clinical advice. What exactly does the member mean by that? Does that mean advice?

Ms L. Mettam interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order, please.

Mr P. Papalia: It was a rhetorical question.

Ms A. SANDERSON: Indeed, it was. Correct. It was a rhetorical question!

Ms L. Mettam interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! Member for Vasse. If you want to have the opportunity to ask a supplementary question, please do not continue to interject.

Ms A. SANDERSON: Does the Leader of the Liberal Party mean that she would not take the advice from the director general of Health, who also happens to be a clinician? Does she mean that she will not take advice from senior experienced clinicians in neonatology at not just the Child and Adolescent Health Service, but also Murdoch, Fiona Stanley Hospital, Joondalup and Midland? We on this side have to take advice from a range of people when making important decisions for this state. It is incumbent on us to listen to all voices, not just one group, because we are making decisions on behalf of everyone. When the infrastructure experts say it is not safe to build that hospital there, it would be irresponsible for me to stand up in the community and say that it was when I have had clear advice that it is not. We will build a world-class, outstanding women's and babies' hospital in the southern suburbs.