

VOLUNTARY ASSISTED DYING — ANNUAL REPORT — SUBSTANCES

1157. Hon Nick Goiran to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Health:

I refer to page 23 of the *Voluntary Assisted Dying Board Western Australia Annual Report 2021–22* that states that '[i]n 2021–22 231 patients, Contact Persons or Administering Practitioners were supplied a voluntary assisted dying substance [and] 6 patients had more than one supply, due to changing from a self-administration to a practitioner administration or substance expiry'. In total, '237 supplies occurred'. I ask:

- (a) given that 237 supplies of voluntary assisted dying substances occurred in the reporting period, and 190 voluntary assisted dying deaths were recorded in the reporting period (*Voluntary Assisted Dying Board Western Australia Annual Report 2021–22* at p5), can the Voluntary Assisted Dying Board account for the 46 supplies of voluntary assisted dying substances supplied but not administered:
 - (i) How many of these voluntary assisted dying substances that were supplied have been returned to an Authorised Disposer;
- (b) further to (a), if some of the voluntary assisted dying substances supplied to patients remain in the possession of some patients for future self-administration, are those patients aware of the expiry timeframes of the voluntary assisted dying substances;
- (c) what are the expiry timeframes of voluntary assisted dying substances used in the administration of voluntary assisted dying in Western Australia;
- (d) does expiry of a voluntary assisted dying substance affect the efficacy of the substance in causing the death of a patient; and
- (e) how many instances of substance expiry were recorded in the 2021–22 reporting period?

Hon Sue Ellery replied:

- (a) Yes.
 - (i) 18
- (b) The Minister for Health cannot comment on behalf of each instance of self-administration and their awareness of expiry dates. Expiry date information is not provided to self-administering patients as this could be seen as coercion (which is in contravention of the VAD Act 2019). The Statewide Pharmacy keeps internal records of the expiry date of the VAD substance which is well beyond the lifespan of patients eligible to access VAD.
- (c) Expiry timeframes vary based on the substance. Due to the constraints of the *Commonwealth Criminal Code*, the Department of Health is unable provide a list of the substances and associated expiry dates.
- (d) The Government is not aware of any tests or trials that have been undertaken to confirm this.
- (e) Three. SWPS replaced these with in-date VAD substances prior to patient administration.