

HEALTH — REGIONAL HOSPITALS — SECURITY HUB

149. Mr R.S. LOVE to the Minister for Health:

I refer to the \$484 000 announced to develop a security hub for seven hospitals across regional Western Australia.

- (1) Noting that Broome Hospital is not on the list of hospitals, despite the number of code black calls at that hospital almost doubling in recent years and, as I have seen myself, knives and other weapons being seized at the hospital almost every day, how were those seven hospitals determined?
- (2) How will a CCTV hub in the middle of the Perth CBD prevent nurses and healthcare workers from being threatened or harmed thousands of kilometres away?

Ms A. SANDERSON replied:

- (1)–(2) I am delighted to answer the member's question because, again, all we hear is criticism and no ideas from members opposite. This is a fantastic development of the WA Country Health Service. Former defence and security experts have come in to help WACHS develop a system that will help make its staff on the ground safer. If the Leader of the Opposition had watched the announcement closely, he would have seen that those sites are only pilot sites and that this will be rolled out to every single regional healthcare facility. This is a learning process.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order, please!

Ms A. SANDERSON: The Leader of the Opposition needed to have an attention span beyond three seconds and to follow it all the way through. This is a half a million dollar investment. I am very proud of this investment. I am very proud of the WA Country Health Service. This has been developed in conjunction with staff on the ground, who suggested this model. Essentially, we have rolled out about 18 000 CCTV cameras across those WACHS sites. It is a huge number of CCTV cameras. The quality of the footage is incredible. They can zoom in and see all areas of the hospitals, but we do protect patient privacy. We can see areas of those hospitals that the staff cannot see, particularly if there are only two staff on site overnight. The cameras are monitored 24/7. The seven sites are simply trial sites so that we can learn. We are in a learning phase over the next two months so that we know that it is right and can roll it out as well as possible. Every single site will be monitored by this system, including Broome Hospital.

I will give a great example of where this has already led to a successful de-escalation. Often, people need to intervene in incidents before they escalate. It is about catching people before they escalate into a state of aggression and violence towards staff. That is what the CCTV cameras do; they allow the monitors located centrally in Perth to notify staff on the ground if someone is kicking off or something is starting to escalate. The staff can then either intervene or call outside help if it is not safe for them to intervene, and the staff can make themselves safe. Recently, at a small south west hospital, someone was vandalising and acting very suspiciously outside the hospital while there were only two staff inside. They were acting very aggressively. The staff immediately called the police, who were immediately dispatched and intervened in that incident before that person could go inside and harm the staff. That was a fantastic outcome.

The Leader of the Opposition saved one of our own members from asking the Dorothy Dixier. Thank you very much! I congratulate WACHS and the staff. The Leader of the Opposition should talk to the staff and find out how they feel. They are so pleased to see this up and running and to have security experts watching their back every minute of every day.