

MT LAWLEY TAFE, ANAESTHETIC TECHNICIANS COURSE

950. Hon Bob Thomas to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Employment and Training:

With reference to the Anaesthetic Technicians Course run by the Mt Lawley TAFE in conjunction with Royal Perth Hospital. As part of this course lectures are held by the RPH anaesthetic specialist one night a week for two hours at Royal Perth Hospital for 27 weeks -

- (1) What provision is made so that external students in country areas can access the lectures by Telehealth Centres based at some country hospitals?
- (2) How much would it cost to direct telecast the lecture each week to the Telehealth Centre at Albany Regional Hospital?
- (3) Will the Government consider this option?
- (4) How much would it cost to videotape these lectures to send to external country students?
- (5) Will the Government consider this option?
- (6) Given the shortage of trained nurses and the occupational health implications of travelling 800 kms between shifts to attend lectures, what action will the Government take to ensure that country nurses such as those in Albany can further their training?

Hon N.F. MOORE replied:

- (1) All students studying the Anaesthetic Technicians Course run by Mt Lawley TAFE are required to attend one lecture per week at Royal Perth Hospital over a period of 27 weeks.
- (2) \$300 per lecture, equating to a total of \$8 100 over 27 weeks. There is currently only one regional student studying this course and, therefore, the cost per head is \$8 100.
- (3) I understand that both Central TAFE and Royal Perth Hospital have investigated this option and have it not be acceptable as -
the cost per head is high
the lectures are heavily interactive requiring a two way telelink facility
while the telelink facility at Albany Regional Hospital is two way, the hospital cannot guarantee its availability as medical emergencies must take precedence.
- (4) \$600 per video, which equates to \$16 200 per the 27 week program. Again, as there is only one regional student, the cost per head is high at \$16 200.
- (5) Again, I understand this option has been explored by Central TAFE and Royal Perth Hospital, but is not considered suitable as -
the cost is prohibitively high
the lectures are highly interactive and therefore not suitable for video format.
- (6) Skill development opportunities for all health professionals employed in rural Western Australia are of major concern to the industry. The use of flexible delivery mechanisms (eg video conferencing and online learning) are supported to the extent that universities and vocational education and training providers are asked to include these delivery options within their normal operational practice. The Government Health Training Advisory Board (GHTAB) will continue to -
actively encourage education and training providers to include flexible delivery mechanisms in all course delivery
actively encourage education and training authorities to consider establishing TAFE/University partnerships in rural locations
seek alternative options, for example using the internet, to support the continued development of professional staff employed in rural locations.