

SOUTH WEST AREA HEALTH SERVICE, DOWNGRADE

148. Mr P.D. OMODEI to the Minister for Health:

I refer the minister to a leaked memo from the Department of Health that outlines the Labor Government's agenda to downgrade health management positions in the South West Area Health Service, which stretches from Yarloop to Walpole.

- (1) Will the minister confirm that under his plan to reduce the number of health service managers in the south west, 17 qualified clinical staff will be replaced with eight clerical personnel?
- (2) Is the minister aware that in my electorate of Warren-Blackwood, this means that one clerical employee will be in charge of up to 55 full-time staff at three different hospitals that are located up to an hour and a half away from each other?
- (3) How does the minister expect one clerical officer to make emergency, medical and staffing decisions at three different hospitals without compromising patient care?
- (4) Will the minister rule out this proposal?

Mr J.A. McGINTY replied:

I am not aware of the leaked memo to which the member referred. I have not seen it and I do not know to what he is referring.

- (1)-(2) No.
- (4) As to whether I will rule it out, I do not know what the document is that the member referred to.
- (3) I cannot remember what question (3) was.

Mr P.D. Omodei: You answered the question in the Legislative Council yesterday.

Mr J.A. McGINTY: What is question (3)?

Mr P.D. Omodei: How can they make clinical decisions in these positions without compromising patient care?

Mr J.A. McGINTY: I think the member has used the wrong premise to underline the question. As I understand the changes being implemented in the south west, it is not intended to make the position responsible a clerical position.

Mr P.D. Omodei: So you do know about the proposal then?

Mr J.A. McGINTY: I do not know anything about a leaked document that the member talked about. I think the member for Mitchell asked me a question about a related matter some weeks ago. However, as I said, my understanding is that it is not a clerical position.