

WOMEN'S AND BABIES' HOSPITAL — RELOCATION

793. Dr D.J. HONEY to the Premier:

I refer to the leaked Child and Adolescent Health Service position paper regarding the location of the new women's and babies' hospital, which according to my notes states —

There is not the critical mass of activity to maintain skills or replicate subspecialties over the two sites, nor the specialist workforce.

- (1) How exactly does the government plan to deliver expanded services, including neonatal, across three sites when we are unable to appropriately staff our current facilities?
- (2) What does the Premier have to say to the clinicians who have stated that this undermines WA's capacity to offer world-class training opportunities?

Mr R.H. COOK replied:

I thank the member for some notice of the question. I thought he was going to ask me the previous question that came from the member for Central Wheatbelt.

Ms M.J. Davies: I'm the shadow.

Mr R.H. COOK: It was just in an area in which he has particular expertise, member.

- (1)–(2) As much as we would all love to see this hospital built overnight, it will not be. It is important that we plan and develop these facilities for a Perth of the future. I do not doubt for a moment that we will see a significant expansion of Western Australia's population and a significant expansion of the services that surround that population over the time that this hospital is developed. I do not think we are talking about a question of critical mass. We are talking about understanding that we will need to see a significant expansion of our hospital services and our clinical staff numbers. From that perspective, I think the member can anticipate a point in the future when the scenario that he characterised would not eventuate. We appreciate the input from everyone on the development of this hospital. It has been forever thus. When developing Fiona Stanley Hospital or undertaking the significant construction of Rockingham Hospital, clinicians always had very strong views about the services and the way those services should be delivered. That is as it should be. I appreciate that the member is taking the views from that draft paper, but I am not sure that that will necessarily be one of the key constraints at the time the hospital is developed.