

GENERAL PRACTITIONER SERVICES — REGIONS

786. Hon SOPHIA MOERMOND to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Health:

I refer the minister to the current wait times in regional areas to see a doctor and for access to medication.

- (1) Is the minister aware that parents in the Geraldton region are currently waiting from eight days to two weeks to get a doctor's appointment for their unwell children?
- (2) Is the minister aware that the only access to a medical practitioner for parents in some regional areas is online, with doctors who are sometimes in other states?
- (3) Is the minister aware that even after receiving scripts online, many regional pharmacies do not have access to the required medication?
- (4) What is the minister doing to alleviate the stress on parents having to rely on telehealth or travelling long distances to Perth for their child to see a GP or collect medication?

Hon SUE ELLERY replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question.

- (1)–(4) Questions regarding the provision of community general practitioner services should be referred to the federal government and agencies that it funds to oversee this. The WA Country Health Service works with these agencies to support their initiatives related to rural general practice viability. The WA Country Health Service provides and has maintained general practitioner services in a small number of remote sites and supports emergency medical services across country WA. Similarly, provision of community pharmacy services is not within the WA Country Health Service's responsibility. The WA Country Health Service has ensured that medication supplies through our hospital and health service network have been maintained, and we are not aware of any delays.