

WOMEN'S AND BABIES' HOSPITAL

140. Ms L. METTAM to the Premier:

I refer to the Premier's 2020 announcement that the new women's and babies' hospital will be fully funded and situated adjacent to Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital G block within the QEII Medical Centre. How is it that the government has managed to allocate only \$10.2 million for the new women's and babies' hospital over the past two years, with the project team tasked with business case development still discussing lighting, waste management and recycling options?

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

The estimated cost for the women's and babies' hospital is around \$1.8 billion. We announced that plan in 2020, as the Leader of the Opposition said. Obviously in the time since then, we have had to do a lot of work. We have to do a business case, planning, and all sorts of analysis and assessment. The ordinary time frame between announcement of a new hospital and opening the hospital is 10 to 15 years. That is normally what happens with a major tertiary hospital. I remember that with Fiona Stanley Hospital, the time period was something in that range. I remember also that Perth Children's Hospital was proposed in the Reid review in the early 2000s, and it was opened—we opened it, actually—in 2018–19, so it took around 15 years. That is because building a hospital is hard; it is a big job. It can go awry if you do not do all the planning and all the work properly. Members will recall what happened at Perth Children's Hospital. I think that was proposed by Bob Kucera. He put in place the report that came up with the Reid review in the early 2000s that proposed a new children's hospital. That hospital was constructed over eight years or so. There was then the issue of lead in the water pipes, which the former government could not resolve, so the hospital sat there completed, but unopened. When we came to office, we took some pretty dramatic steps to get to the bottom of it, and we were able to open it by 2018–19. That is why you have to plan these things properly, because you can have things go awry like that. That is why money has been allocated for all those purposes. We are very keen to ensure that we can open a new women's and babies' hospital as soon as we can for the women and babies of Western Australia.