

CORONAVIRUS — TESTING

169. Hon COLIN TINCKNELL to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Health:

I note with interest that in today's *The West Australian*, the Department of Health has published information about the COVID clinics, including the criteria under which a person should consider attending for testing. I also note that other countries are testing thousands of people a day.

- (1) What are the provisions for testing for anyone who meets these criteria, but does not live in the metropolitan area or is unable to attend one of these metropolitan testing centres?
- (2) What is the actual daily testing capacity; how many people could we test?
- (3) Are we in a position to ramp up the testing to include anyone who has a reasonable suspicion that they may be at risk, such as those who have recently travelled, but are not showing symptoms; and, if not —
 - (a) what factors, if any, place a restraint on our ability to undertake increased testing; and
 - (b) when does the minister foresee this changing?

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY replied:

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

- (1) The WA Country Health Service reports that any WACHS hospital or WACHS health facility has capacity to test for COVID-19.
- (2) Short-term capacity is over 750 tests a day. A second testing facility at Fiona Stanley Hospital, due to open later this week, will increase statewide capacity.
- (3) The current understanding of the disease is that a person could test negative without symptoms, but as the incubation period for the disease can be up to two weeks, that person will still be at risk.
 - (a) Availability of equipment and solutions for testing, along with personal protective equipment, can place restraints on increased testing. However, supply is being monitored and additional resources sought as required.
 - (b) The disease profile does not support testing of asymptomatic people.