

PERTH CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL — WATER QUALITY AND COMMISSIONING

205. Mrs J.M.C. STOJKOVSKI to the Minister for Health:

Firstly, on behalf of the member for Bunbury, may I acknowledge and welcome the members of the Rotary Club of Bunbury Leschenault to the gallery today.

I refer to the McGowan Labor government's commitment and determination to resolve the water issues at the Perth Children's Hospital.

- (1) Can the minister advise the house why the Western Australian public can have confidence in the hospital's water quality?
- (2) Can the minister outline the process of commissioning, which will see this hospital finally open for sick kids and their parents?

Mr R.H. COOK replied:

I would like to thank the member for the question and can I also say how delighted I was to see her on Sunday at the public tour day at the new Perth Children's Hospital.

Mr W.R. Marmion: Why didn't you invite the local member?

The SPEAKER: I will invite the local member to be quiet.

Mr R.H. COOK: That interjection was almost as incomplete as the actual hospital that the previous government left to us when we came into office.

- (1)–(2) I am very pleased to say and report to the chamber that we have fixed the problems associated with the Perth Children's Hospital. Western Australians can have absolute confidence that we are now moving forward to open the Perth Children's Hospital. This achievement could only have been gained through strong leadership—the leadership of the Premier—to make sure that we sorted out the chaos at that hospital.

Mr A. Krsticevic interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Carine.

Mr R.H. COOK: We have been working effectively with all stakeholders and taking the hard decisions and decisive action needed to make sure that we completed the necessary works to resolve the issues around water quality and have this Perth Children's Hospital open as soon as possible. You might ask, Mr Speaker, how long we would have had to wait for this hospital to open if we had left it in the hands of the other mob. How long would we have had to endure the chaos that we and the Public Accounts Committee saw if it had been left to the previous side?

Mr A. Krsticevic interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Carine.

Mr R.H. COOK: In overseeing this project, the McGowan government's priority has always been the care and safety of the sick kids who will be using that hospital and the staff—the doctors, the nurses, and the allied health and administration staff—who are charged with their care. I can say now that Western Australians can have every confidence that the quality of water at the hospital is to such a satisfaction that we can move forward with its opening. The only way we could get there was by taking practical completion. I notice the odd interjection from the member for Nedlands, who from time to time waxed and waned depending on which neighbour he spoke to, about whether we should have taken practical completion, but ultimately we are lucky that we have a McGowan Labor government so that we could actually move forward.

Remediation work, which I approved, to replace the thermostatic mixing valves under the guidance of the Chief Health Officer —

Mr S.K. L'Estrange: How many?

Mr R.H. COOK: It was around 1 500, member. If the member for Churchlands had listened to previous answers, he would know these things.

The SPEAKER: Members, you will have a chance to ask a question later.

Mr R.H. COOK: Having undertaken that remediation work, the Chief Health Officer tested over 300 randomly selected points in the hospital to retest the water against the same stringent benchmarks he set in June 2017. On 27 March, I was in a position to advise the public that the water was safe to drink and that the Chief Health Officer has now signed off on the hospital's potable drinking water. Now that we have resolved this range of issues

associated with the water and are continuing to work through the other minor defects at the hospital, we are in a position to look at—as the Premier announced on the weekend—moving to a staged opening of Perth Children’s Hospital. Perth Children’s Hospital is set to receive its first patients through outpatient appointments on 14 May, followed two weeks later by the commencement of elective surgery on 28 May. We will then have the transition of emergency department and inpatient services from Princess Margaret Hospital for Children to Perth Children’s Hospital, which will take place on Sunday, 10 June, when the Princess Margaret Hospital emergency department will close. This is a significant milestone in the life of this government and the life of this hospital. It is important that we take time to reflect on the hard work that has gone into this hospital to bring it to this point.

Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Dawesville, I call you to order for the first time.

Mr R.H. COOK: Turning this hospital from an incomplete building site into a world-leading, state-of-the-art hospital took leadership. It required the leadership provided by the Premier and this government to make sure that we took the decisive steps to bring about the opening of this hospital, and it took leadership from the department.

Mrs L.M. Harvey: Four minutes! Wind it up!

The SPEAKER: Have you got an egg timer there, member, because we have been going only a short time? It is not four minutes.

Mrs L.M. Harvey: I have been timing it.

The SPEAKER: I will make a decision on how long question time is. I did not realise you were an Acting or Deputy Speaker. Minister, you will wrap this up.

Mr R.H. COOK: Sorry; I was interrupted, Mr Speaker. I will start again. I would like to thank the member for the question. No, I just want to take the opportunity to thank the leadership of the departments that worked so tirelessly to bring us to this point. I want to commend them for their hard work in commissioning this hospital and, on behalf of all members of Parliament, give our thanks to them, because now we are in a position to not only have sick kids cared for in Perth Children’s Hospital, but also bring the hardworking staff at Princess Margaret Hospital to this state-of-the-art new facility to provide world-leading care for the sick kids of WA.