

OBSTETRIC SERVICES — NORTHAM, MIDLAND AND KATANNING

**538. Hon DARREN WEST to the minister representing the Minister for Health:**

- (1) Are any obstetric services available at Northam Health Service, Merredin Health Service and Katanning Hospital?
- (2) If no to (1), when were these services removed and why were these services removed?
- (3) Was any consultation undertaken prior to the removal of obstetric services; and, if so, who was consulted?
- (4) What birthing and other obstetric services are available to mothers who live in Northam, Merredin and Katanning?
- (5) Are there any other hospitals in WA that had obstetric services as at 1 July 2013 that no longer offer these services; and, if so which hospitals have been affected; and when were the services removed?

**Hon COL HOLT replied:**

I thank the member for some notice of this question. I answer on behalf of the Minister for Planning representing the Minister for Health.

- (1) No.
- (2) The WA Country Health Service did not make the decision to remove services at these sites. Obstetric services in Northam ceased on 30 June 2015, due to the retirement of the sole general practitioner providing these services. Obstetric services in Merredin ceased in 2003, due to GP obstetric services and obstetric anaesthetic cover no longer being available and limited midwives able to provide services to low-risk maternity patients. Obstetric services in Katanning ceased in 2012, due to GP obstetric services and obstetric anaesthetic cover no longer being available.
- (3) Extensive consultation with the local communities, medical and nursing practitioners, Rural Health West, the University of Western Australia Rural Clinical School of Western Australia, Western Australian General Practice Education and Training, and King Edward Memorial Hospital for Women was completed by WACHS prior to the cessation of services at these three sites.
- (4) Current birthing and obstetric services for mothers in Northam and Merredin include community midwifery for antenatal and postnatal care; admission for delivery to Narrogin hospital, St John of God Midland Public Hospital for public or private services provided at that site, and other metropolitan hospitals; follow-up postnatal admission at Northam hospital following early discharge; and outpatient services for medium-to-high-risk mothers by SJOG Midland Public Hospital. Current birthing and obstetric services for mothers in Katanning include community midwifery services for antenatal and postnatal care; and admission for delivery to Albany and Narrogin hospitals, as well as all metropolitan facilities.
- (5) Kaleeya Hospital's maternity and neonatal services were transferred to Fiona Stanley Hospital on 2 December 2014, and Kaleeya Hospital's obstetric services were closed at that time. Obstetric services at Swan District Hospital were transferred to St John of God Midland Public Hospital on 24 November 2015.