

BROOME DISTRICT HOSPITAL - MEDICAL ROSTER

179. Hon KEN BASTON to the minister representing the Minister for Health:

Ministerial letter reference 4-40711, dated 4 January 2007, referred to the trial of a new medical roster at Broome District Hospital.

- (1) Has the promised evaluation of the trial roster taken place; and, if so, has it reduced the extended hours worked by doctors?
- (2) Was the impact on waiting times for patients in the accident and emergency section considered in the evaluation; if not, why not; and, if so, what was the comparative average waiting time for patients in the accident and emergency section before and after the trial roster?
- (3) If the evaluation has not taken place, when will it be conducted, given that it was promised for early 2007?

Hon SUE ELLERY replied:

I thank the member for some notice of this question.

- (1) A new medical roster was implemented on 3 October 2006. It was agreed that the hospital's doctors would evaluate the altered roster and advise the hospital's management on its suitability to meet their needs. There have been no complaints from the doctors to the hospital's management about the new roster, and it is currently meeting the needs of the hospital in its provision of care to the community. The roster is continuing without alteration at present.
- (2) Yes. The waiting times for patients in the emergency department were not specifically considered by the doctors in their review of the roster, as all patients presenting to the emergency department are triaged by a registered nurse and are seen by medical staff within the prescribed benchmarks dependent on the patient's acuity.
- (3) A review of the hospital's medical staffing model was carried out during November 2006. It is to be noted that this was not the evaluation of the new medical roster being done concurrently by the doctors. As a result of the review, funding has been provided for Broome District Hospital to employ an additional permanent full-time district medical officer, plus a junior medical officer, for the six months of each year considered to be the tourist season. Recruitment to these positions has commenced and it is anticipated that the new positions will be in place by the commencement of the busiest part of the tourist season in June-July 2007.