

HEALTH — INFORMATION PORTAL

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

I refer to this government's commitment to putting patients first and ensuring they are fully informed about how their hospitals are operating.

- (1) What is this government doing to improve transparency in our health system and ensure vital information is available to the public?
- (2) Why is it so important?

Mr R.H. COOK replied:

(1)–(2) As they say, I broke some bones in my hands, but on the other hand, I am in good health!

Several members interjected.

Mr R.H. COOK: That is all; thank you!

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Minister, that was very close to a point of order, but I will let you off.

Mr R.H. COOK: I would like to thank the member for the question. It is important that we put patients first and part of putting patients first is about creating a transparent, responsive, world-leading health system. One of the frustrations I had as the shadow Minister for Health—I am sure that the current shadow minister might reflect on this—is that under the previous mob, we were constantly trying to seek information about how well the system was working. Unfortunately, the information was difficult to find and difficult to navigate. There was an absolute lack of transparency about the way the health system was working on behalf of the patients of Western Australia. We are going to make some changes so that we can put patients first, make sure our health system is transparent and ensure that the system is operating in the interests of the people it is there to serve. I am very pleased to say that we will move to a single portal or dashboard of information for the information we put out there. We want to make sure that patients, at a glance, can understand how long they will be waiting in an emergency department, how long it will take to see an outpatient specialist, or how long they will have to wait for their surgery. This is all information to which they are entitled. I cannot explain the number of times that we were left waiting, under the previous government, for basic information to be uploaded onto the Department of Health's website.

Mr W.R. Marmion interjected.

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

Mr R.H. COOK: Often when that information was loaded up, around elective surgery and so forth, it was in detailed PDF documents that were difficult to navigate. As I said, we will move to a single portal, a dashboard, of the health department's performance to make sure all this information is available, not just for members of Parliament who know where to find it, but to average punters who want to know how well their health system is working on their behalf.

As part of the first stage of this process, by early next year, we are aiming to see improved transparency access and navigation through the availability of existing publicly available performance reports via a dedicated "our performance" webpage; presentation of the elective surgery waitlist report in an easily navigable and accessible webpage, not through lengthy PDF documents; and a state implementation, replacing these documents with a web-based portal that allows patients to see current information—information that they can use to boost their health literacy and use the system better. As we know, we have been spending some time fixing up the mess left to us by the previous mob. We are going to hold ourselves to a higher standard—a standard that will see our health system turned into a transparent, world-leading, adaptive and responsive health system that will act and put patients first.