

DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING — MEDICAL FORMS

954. Hon SAMANTHA ROWE to the minister representing the Minister for Housing:

I refer to the experience of one of my constituents who, in seeking to have a Department of Housing medical form filled in by her general practitioner, was told that she would have to pay \$100 to have the form completed.

- (1) Is the government aware that persons who hold Centrelink Health Care Cards are being charged these exorbitant fees to fulfil Department of Housing requirements?
- (2) Does the government think it is fair to expect holders of Centrelink Health Care Cards to pay these sorts of fees to fulfil Department of Housing requirements?
- (3) Does the Department of Housing make available to tenants and applicants information on those GPs who will provide form-filling services free of charge?
- (4) If no to (3), why not?
- (5) Will the minister commit to liaising with the Department of Health to provide this service to Centrelink Health Care Card holders for minimal or no cost; and, if not, why not?

Hon KEN BASTON replied:

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

- (1)–(2) The department is aware that some medical practitioners bulk-bill for a service wherein the practitioner agrees to accept the relevant Medicare benefit as full payment for the service, and that when a service is not bulk-billed, a practitioner may privately raise an additional charge against a patient.
- (3)–(4) The department is unable to answer this question in the time available and I request that the member place this part of the question on notice.
- (5) Western Australians have access to great health care in this state, and they have choices, and this government will not be directing practitioners or members of the community.