

STATE BUDGET 2012–13 — HEALTH CAPITAL WORKS

**267. Mrs L.M. HARVEY to the Minister for Health:**

During the almost interminably dull and dreary speeches in the budget reply yesterday, the Leader of the Opposition suggested that the health budget contained a continuation of the capital works program for health services established under the Labor government.

**Mr M. McGowan:** That's very nasty!

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** You, Leader of the Opposition, did not mention Scarborough once; what do you expect?

I ask the minister: was the Leader of the Opposition correct or was he displaying his usual lack of research and understanding in these health matters?

**Dr K.D. HAMES replied:**

Mr Speaker, I thank the member for the question and point out to you that she is asking for an opinion. But in my opinion, yes, it is the second of those two options.

I was very interested to hear the Leader of the Opposition claim yesterday that the health budget contains a continuation of capital works programs begun under a Labor government. I recall seeing, at a recent tourism function we held, hundreds and hundreds of people from the tourism industry. Madam Wang, Consul General of the People's Republic of China in WA, got up and said how proud she was of the work she had been able to do with this government—and with justification—in getting China Southern Airlines started in WA. The Leader of the Opposition got up and said that he was very pleased to see that I had continued the work that he had begun as Minister for Tourism as though he had something to do with it!

I tell the Leader of the Opposition that many tourism ministers were involved in that. In fact, Alan Carpenter went over to China with a pocketful of money trying to get those direct flights started, and failed. Every one of Labor's tourism ministers failed. It was this government and I who delivered that service.

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Members, it took over an hour yesterday in question time to get through the number of questions I wish to achieve in this place as a minimum. I do not want to see that repeated today.

**Dr K.D. HAMES:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. We are in fact talking about health.

The Leader of the Opposition claimed credit for the capital works program that we have undertaken. I have given credit to the opposition for the Reid review. The review done by Reid putting forward a plan for the future of hospital services was one that we supported. From my very first day as shadow health minister in opposition, I and the Parliament supported the development of that program and that path. To say that the fact that the plan to follow a program of development for hospitals was put in place under the Labor government therefore means that Labor members have credit for every construction that comes after is a nonsense. If that was the case, then we built the railway line to Mandurah!

Several members interjected.

**Dr K.D. HAMES:** Clearly Labor wants to take credit for building the railway line to Mandurah. Quite clearly we have said, "Yes, you built it. We did all the plans. We had the funds there for getting the railway line there, but you built it." By the same token —

**Mr D.A. Templeman** interjected.

**Dr K.D. HAMES:** The Speaker is writing down the member for Mandurah's name!

By the same token, when we come in and build things it is quite reasonable that we take the credit for doing those things. Let us compare the construction of hospital services under our government, going back to when we were in government under Richard Court, versus the Labor government. I will go back to those years and look at the hospitals that were built by the Liberal government, and the additional beds that were built, in particular in our previous term of government from 1993 to 2001. At Joondalup Health Campus there were 295 beds; Peel Health Campus, 110; South West Health Campus, 130; Northam Hospital, 40; and Armadale-Kelmscott Memorial Hospital, 120. That is a total of 695 beds. The former Labor government put in an effort and built some hospital beds. Hedland Health Campus went from 33 to 50 beds, plus 17; Fitzroy Crossing Hospital, 15; Ravenshorpe Health Centre, 11; and Moore Hospital, built under enormous pressure, 20 beds. Money was spent on Broome Hospital with no change in bed numbers and the same goes for Derby Hospital and Carnarvon Hospital, and a slight increase in bed numbers for Kununurra Hospital. That is nowhere near the same number of beds that were built under our previous government. All we need do is compare capital expenditure in Labor

years with capital expenditure in our government. I have had time to go back only to 2005–06. If Labor spent a lot more in the years before, I apologise, but let us look at the year-by-year capital expenditure on health services. In 2005–06 it was \$125 255 000. It moved up in 2006–07 to \$163 million. In 2007–08 Labor was building up and it went to \$231 million. In 2008–09 it went up to \$360 million; in 2009–10, \$490 million; and in 2010–11, \$834 million. The estimate for this current financial year is \$1.472 billion. Therefore, for Labor to come into this house and try to claim credit for the massive capital works program that this government has undertaken is a nonsense.

Let us look at what happened with funding when we came through. The previous government put aside \$1.76 billion for Fiona Stanley Hospital, but all it had done was announce it had started by getting a bulldozer to knock over some trees without any plans in place and without any design work whatsoever done. We came and added to it with commonwealth funding that we negotiated—getting our money back into Western Australia—and those additional funds took it to \$2 billion. The previous government had \$200 million for the children’s hospital. We are spending \$1.2 billion. The previous government had money for Midland health campus and, again, we negotiated doubling of those funds. The previous government had about half the money for Joondalup Health Campus; it was about \$100 million over budget, which we had to fund when we came in. Poor old Albany! The previous government had promised Albany year after year after year. It started with \$44 million, went to \$50 million and announced an increase just before the election. We put in, with both existing funding and royalties for regions funding, a total of \$170 million and that hospital is almost complete.

**Mr P.B. Watson:** Well done, minister!

**Dr K.D. HAMES:** Thank you! The previous government had \$77 million for Busselton Hospital and we are spending \$117 million. Poor old member for Kalgoorlie, who is not in the chamber at the moment, I remember the previous minister announcing that the government would not proceed with the development at Kalgoorlie Hospital. Even though the previous government had most of the money needed, it was not proceeding because there were not enough businesses around that were able to do the construction. There were not enough people who could build the hospital. What a load of nonsense that was! Talk about a sidestep. With royalties for regions funding, we again increased that to take it to \$55.8 million. Since then, of course, as we talked about in a grievance, there has been funding for the Karratha hospital. There has been massive investment in hospitals. We have half a billion dollars going into the southern inland health initiative and that has a major component of capital funds to upgrade hospitals. For the opposition to try to claim credit for those is an absolute nonsense!