

GEOFF BARKLA — WORKERS' COMPENSATION CASE

4580. Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich to the Minister for Commerce

- (1) Why has WorkCover Western Australia refused to allow Mr Geoff Barkla, who is suffering from a work related adjustment disorder and depression, to receive treatment by a medical practitioner or WorkCover accredited medical practitioner?
- (2) Are you aware of claims by Mr Barkla that this denial by WorkCover has significantly contributed to his recent anxiety attack, as he is not receiving the advised treatment by a medical practitioner?
- (3) Given that at least half a dozen medical practitioners have agreed that Mr Barkla is suffering from an adjustment disorder and/or depression, on what basis is he being denied access to the treatment he requires?

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN replied:

- (1) In Western Australia access to compensation for medical treatment is determined by agreement between an employer's insurer and the worker, or if the claim is in dispute, through the dispute resolution process. Mr Barkla's case is still the subject of a dispute before the Dispute Resolution Directorate and all parties have legal representation. To state that WorkCover is refusing to allow Mr Barkla treatment is incorrect as WorkCover has no jurisdiction to authorise or refuse treatment.
- (2) My office has received correspondence from Mr Barkla which was been responded to.
- (3) Mr Barkla's claim is the subject of a dispute before WorkCover WA's independent Dispute Resolution Directorate. Until the dispute is resolved or the liability for Mr Barkla's claim is determined, the employer has no responsibility to make any payments.