

GYNAECOLOGY SPECIALIST - KIMBERLEY REGION

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

In January 2007 and again in March 2007 outpatient clinic appointments with a gynaecological specialist in Broome were cancelled with less than one week's notice.

- (1) What is considered to be a clinically acceptable time for patients who have had two gynaecological medical appointments cancelled over two months to wait for examination?
- (2) What steps are being taken to recruit a gynaecologist for the west Kimberley, and when is it anticipated that this person will be appointed?
- (3) Given that there is currently no gynaecology specialist available and that one of the guidelines of eligibility to access the patient assisted travel scheme is that patients need to travel more than 100 kilometres one way to access eligible specialist medical treatment -
 - (a) will patients in Broome and the west Kimberley who have had appointments cancelled at the last two gynaecology clinics be eligible to access the PAT scheme to consult their nearest specialist; and
 - (b) if not, why not?

Hon SUE ELLERY replied:

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

- (1) The clinically acceptable time for patients requiring specialist examination varies depending on the individual case.
- (2) The recruitment process for a gynaecologist for the Kimberley has been completed and a new gynaecologist, on a five-year contract, will be commencing in the position from 16 April 2007. A locum gynaecologist has been employed to provide cover from 2 to 15 April 2007.
- (3) Patients in Broome and the west Kimberley who have had appointments cancelled at the last two gynaecology clinics have had their cases reviewed. Any cases requiring follow-up prior to the next scheduled clinic have been given access to the patient assisted travel scheme when required.