

RONALD McDONALD HOUSE

**3. Ms R.S. STEPHENS to the Premier:**

I refer to the McGowan Labor government's commitment to providing world-class health services for all Western Australians.

- (1) Can the Premier advise the house how this government's support for Ronald McDonald House will assist sick children and their families from regional WA during their toughest times?
- (2) Can the Premier outline how this support will build on the government's investment into regional health services?

**Mr M. McGOWAN replied:**

I thank the member for Albany for the question.

- (1)–(2) Western Australia is a state that puts a real focus on supporting sick children. We have been the home of Telethon for the last 55 years. We have implemented the future health research and innovation fund, we have funded things like the Kids' Bridge, we are supporting the building of a new children's hospice in Swanbourne, and we have a whole range of other measures. I was pleased the other day to announce that we are going to spend another \$9.6 million on doubling the number of beds supported by Ronald McDonald House. I went to Ronald McDonald House last week and met with Adam Gilchrist from the team there, who do a wonderful job, and announced the increase in beds. That means that the current 47 beds will go to 97 beds. That means that people from regional WA who have sick children attending care at Perth Children's Hospital or King Edward Memorial Hospital for Women will have the opportunity to stay, free of charge, in supported accommodation at Ronald McDonald House to support their children undergoing treatment at those hospitals. That is more than a doubling, actually, in the number of beds available at Ronald McDonald House.

As members know, Ronald McDonald House does an incredible job supporting families. When you go and meet some of the children there who are being supported by their parents—some of them are undergoing treatment for brain tumours or serious cancers or other very serious illnesses—you just want to help; you just want to do everything you can to help. Providing additional beds at Ronald McDonald House is an important thing, and I would like to thank Ronald McDonald House and Adam Gilchrist for advocating for it. We are pleased to respond with this additional funding support.

It builds on the other things we have done to support regional families with their health care. We have increased the patient assisted travel scheme from \$60 to \$100 per night; we are rebuilding the Geraldton and Bunbury health campuses; and there are new medical facilities all over the state, from the top to the bottom. But one of the most important things we can do is support those kids who come to the city with terrible illnesses, and their families who are going through a very, very difficult time.