

WOMEN'S AND BABIES' HOSPITAL

**254. Ms E.J. KELSBIE to the Premier:**

I refer to the McGowan Labor government's commitment to building a \$1.8 billion new women's and babies' hospital. Can the Premier outlined to the house how locating the new hospital at the Fiona Stanley Hospital precinct instead of the Queen Elizabeth II Medical Centre will benefit all Western Australians?

**Mr M. McGOWAN replied:**

I thank the member for Warren–Blackwood for the question.

I am very pleased that we are proceeding with the new women's and babies' hospital to replace King Edward Memorial Hospital for Women. Last month, with the Minister for Health, I announced that the hospital will be built at Fiona Stanley Hospital in Murdoch. It is already fully funded by the state government, due to our good financial management, with \$1.8 billion set aside. Although King Edward has been a stalwart of the health system for more than 100 years, it is time for a new women's and babies' hospital to be built.

By locating it at Fiona Stanley Hospital, we will be building the new hospital on a greenfield site that is connected to the largest tertiary hospital in Western Australia and adjacent to the freeway. All the new roadworks that we have put in place will make it easier to access the hospital without all the disruption that would have occurred on the Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital site. Anyone who has been to Sir Charles Gairdner, as probably all members have, knows it is a very constrained site. Through the business case process, we learnt that it would have been incredibly difficult to have the hospital at Sir Charles Gairdner because certain buildings would need to be taken down and walls would need to be taken off existing wards and other buildings that contained patients. We then would have had to take a whole bunch, if not hundreds, of patients out of that hospital and put them somewhere else, and where that would have been was difficult to ascertain. It then would have taken another four years to complete compared with building it at Fiona Stanley Hospital. All those issues were identified through this process.

We made a decision and we dealt with the issue. The cabinet made a decision based upon advice that it would be faster, quicker and more cost effective and would create a better outcome to build the new women's and babies' hospital alongside Fiona Stanley Hospital, a hospital that already does significant work with babies.

I have one other point, and considering the member is the member for Warren–Blackwood, this is important to note. By building the new hospital at the Fiona Stanley site, it will be closer to Jandakot Airport. Where does the Royal Flying Doctor Service arrive? It arrives at Jandakot Airport, so we will get women and babies from regional WA to hospital quicker at the Fiona Stanley Hospital site than we would at the Sir Charles Gairdner site. Almost by definition they will have been travelling for a longer period of time than someone from any part of Perth. That is important, because women and babies from regional WA are important, and that is one of the reasons this decision will benefit regional WA.

There will be expansions at Osborne Park Hospital and additional services there, including a family birthing centre, and neonatal services at Perth Children's Hospital will also be expanded. We will be able to have this state-of-the-art new hospital built, debt-free, at the Fiona Stanley Hospital site four or five years sooner than the alternative.