



**Question on Notice
For 8th September 2009**

For the Minister for Health, Hon John Hill

When will the St John Ambulance building in Port Lincoln be completed and what is the anticipated cost?

Has the Department instructed hospitals to delay the payment of bills or is the delay attributed to the new shared services arrangement?

How are the expenditure limits of Departmental issued corporate credit cards determined?

**EYRE PENINSULA HEALTH SERVICES
19 July 2004**

Mrs PENFOLD (Flinders): Will the Minister for Health give the house an assurance that the acute care services will still be available in the 10 hospitals on Eyre Peninsula beyond 2004 and that those acute care services that have already been removed will be replaced? On 6 August 2002, in estimates, the minister said that she was happy to say on the record that there was no intention to make any changes to acute care services on Eyre Peninsula. However, surgery and obstetric services have already been removed from some of the hospitals.

The Hon. L. STEVENS (Minister for Health): I am rather surprised that the honourable member would ask the question because I have seen yesterday's quite stunning press release of the deputy leader asserting all sorts of misinformation about matters in relation to services on Eyre Peninsula. I am surprised that, in the face of that press release full of misinformation, the honourable member would stand up in this house again today. However, let me put some things on the record. There were so many things in the deputy leader's release—

The Hon. M.J. Wright: Why are you surprised about that?

The Hon. L. STEVENS: I am not surprised any more, in answer to my colleague, but we are getting rather tired of this approach by the deputy leader; that is, his standing up on the weekend and throwing a whole lot of misinformation into the media which upsets and scares people, and then, of course, the next day, or shortly afterwards, this is all found to be wrong. Of course, he hopes that some of it might have stuck. We have become used to the way in which the deputy leader behaves. I believe that it is not a very ethical way of behaving, but then again that is the deputy leader.

Today, I have had very clear information provided to me from the General Manager of the Eyre Regional Health Service, Mr Gary Stewart, in response to all the allegations and insinuations made by the deputy leader. Mr Stewart said he was stunned when he was made aware of the recent claims by the opposition health spokesman Dean Brown. I will put on the record what Mr Stewart said in his press release. The press release goes on to say that Mr Stewart indicated categorically that there would be no hospital closures on Eyre Peninsula, which is one of the things the deputy leader was asserting. Mr Stewart said that the Eyre Regional Health Service was responsible for the planning and funding of health services on Eyre Peninsula, and the subject of hospital closures had never been contemplated, considered or discussed at any time by either the management or the board of directors of the Eyre

Regional Health Service. Mr Stewart further said that he had no knowledge of any hospitals being targeted as claimed by Mr Brown.

He said that, some three weeks ago, the board of directors and he were briefed on the budget for the 2004-05 financial year. The key points that came out during that briefing were that an increase in the budget would occur for the Eyre region, and he expected that, as a result of this, additional funding would be able to be provided to the Port Lincoln Health Services. He also expected that the funding levels provided to hospitals in the previous financial year would be maintained and that there would be no reduction in services across Eyre Peninsula.

Further, Mr Stewart said that there was absolute support for the maintenance of existing Eyre Peninsula health services and that the claims of closures and locations being targeted were fanciful and at complete odds with the reality of what was occurring. He said that, at that time, builders were on-site at the Cowell Hospital enlarging and upgrading the accident and emergency departments and that this upgrade, at a total cost of in excess of \$300 000, was being jointly funded by the Department of Health, the Eyre Regional Health Service and the Eastern Eyre Health and Aged Care Service. Mr Stewart also said that obstetric services had been reintroduced into the Wudinna Hospital in the last month.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. L. STEVENS: I haven't been there, actually. He said that in the last two weeks representatives of the Department of Health, the Eyre Regional Health Service and the Mid-West Health Service had met to discuss the planned \$600 000 upgrade of facilities at Elliston and that, in the last three months, work had just been completed on the upgrade of patient accommodation at both Cummins and Tumby Bay hospitals at a total cost of some \$2 million. Further, he said that in respect of Streaky Bay it was correct that elective surgery had ceased on a temporary basis 12 months ago. That decision was made by the Mid-West Health Board on safety and quality grounds following advice provided by its senior management team. So, in answer to the question, I suggest to the member for Flinders that she cease listening to the deputy leader. If she would like a briefing on all of the things that are happening in her region, all she has to do is ask and we will provide.