

Question on Notice
No. 371
Asked on 9 March 2006

MR QUINN asked the Minister for Health (MR ROBERTSON)—

QUESTION:

For the years 2001-02, 2002-03, 2003-04, 2004-05 and 2005-06 (year to date) what is the total amount spent by Queensland Health on media clippings/media monitoring services (reported separately)?

ANSWER:

Queensland Health spent the following amounts on media clippings and media monitoring services over the financial years requested, through companies Reame and Media Monitors:

2001-02 - \$49,906;
2002-03 - \$94,559;
2003-04 - \$85,265;
2004-05 - \$126,828; and
2005-06 (financial year to 28 February, 2006) - \$152,188.

The amounts for the 2004-05 and 2005-06 financial years include significant additional transcript, clip and monitoring costs associated with the Dr Jayant Patel matter, which received unprecedented media coverage for Queensland Health.

Queensland Health also incurred significant media clipping and monitoring costs associated with the Commission of Inquiry. Apart from direct monitoring, the Department also provided a large volume of media related material as part of formal submissions and legal activities.

Further, there were additional costs associated with the Forster Review, and an increase in monitoring costs directly linked to extensive reporting and coverage of the interim and final reports.

Queensland Health's extensive recruitment campaign and associated media coverage also contributed to the rise in monitoring costs for the period.

Overall, the heightened media interest in health-related matters meant there was a significant increase in the number of media articles and electronic stories generated, and consequently a flow-on for Queensland Health in terms of media monitoring costs.

The necessity to respond to the increased media attention also led to an unusually larger number of electronic media transcripts and broadcasts being ordered.

The reduction in the volume of media being generated from the Dr Patel matter, Commission of Inquiry, and Forster Review since December 2005 has led to an associated decrease in media monitoring costs for Queensland Health.

By way of demonstration, Queensland Health was charged \$25,802 by Media Monitors in September 2005 for monitoring services. The Media Monitors charge for February 2006 was \$15,617.