

Question on Notice
No. 837
Asked on 24 May 2006

MR FOLEY asked the Minister for Health (MR ROBERTSON)-

QUESTION:

With reference to the document Queensland Cancer Control Strategic Directions 2005-2010 outlined as Strategy 3 under Objective 11 on prostate cancer it states: "Support and implement education for primary health care providers, their patients and the community on the risks and benefits of prostate cancer testing" and as prostate cancer receives no further specific mention in the strategic directions and as the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia fact sheet states prostate cancer is life-threatening and is becoming a greater risk to men earlier in their lives –

Will he give the undertaking to instigate testing for at risk groups?

ANSWER:

Latest data indicates that the mortality rate from prostate cancer peaked in Queensland in 1993, and has been decreasing by 2.4% per year since then.

The Cancer Council Australia's *Prostate Cancer Screening Position Statement* recommends that men at above-average risk of prostate cancer should discuss the risks and benefits of prostate cancer screening with their doctor, taking age and other individual risk factors (eg. family history) into account.

There is considerable effort at the National and State levels being put into the development of suitable education programs to support General Practitioners in this role. The Queensland Cancer Control Strategic Directions 2005-2010 recognises this challenging but important role and indicates the Government's intent to educate and support General Practitioners in this undertaking.

Once the individual has made an informed choice about whether or not to be tested, the appropriate test (including the PSA blood test) is undertaken in the primary care sector. In this regard the testing comes under the Commonwealth's Medical Benefits Scheme.