

Question on Notice
No. 283
Asked on 11 March 2008

MRS CUNNINGHAM asked the Minister for Health (MR ROBERTSON)-

QUESTION:

In relation to school dental vans-

- (1) Has the regularity of visits to schools by these vans been reduced?
- (2) Is that reduction by 50 percent?
- (3) Are students now only having oral health check-ups with no actual treatments being given?
- (4) Do students now have to have all dental work done by private dentists?

ANSWER:

- (1) In some areas the regularity of visits to schools by vans has been reduced due to workforce shortages. In 2006-07, the state average time between visits to schools was 22 months. However, in many areas a combined model of care occurs, whereby patients are assessed in the vans and complex treatment is given in fixed clinics.

Queensland Health is planning to build new dental vans by the end of 2009, which will comply with stringent infection control and workplace health and safety guidelines and enable more dental treatments in vans in schools.

- (2) The reduction of visits is not by 50 percent. The recently introduced combined model of care (involving both dental vans and fixed clinics) allows flexibility and enables, in applicable areas, more complex treatments to be undertaken in fixed clinics where it is easier to meet stringent infection control standards. In the financial year 2006-07 230,434 Courses of Care were provided to eligible school children in vans and fixed clinics.
- (3) Students are being offered check-ups and treatments, but not all treatments are being done in the vans. In many areas dental examinations are offered in dental vans at all suburban schools which have van access with follow-up treatment (e.g. extractions and fillings) being done at fixed public oral health clinics. Most Queensland Health Districts provide treatment services in either a mobile dental van or a fixed school clinic.

- (4) Students do not have to have all dental work done by private dentists, as evidenced by the 230,434 Courses of Care provided to children last financial year in the public sector. In some instances, parents may opt to take their children to private dentists but all eligible children will still have an opportunity for a dental check-up in the public sector. In some rural and remote areas where there is no public dentist, patients are outsourced to the private sector, paid for by Queensland Health.