

Question on Notice
No. 694
Asked on 11 May 2011

MR JOHNSON asked the Minister for Health (MR WILSON)-

QUESTION:

With reference to an incident on 4 May 2011 involving a seriously injured Gregory constituent who was denied ambulance service and who, despite serious injuries in a crush accident in the cattle yards on his property near Alpha, was informed that they would have to locate their own driver and then collect the ambulance and that it would be quicker to take the patient to the hospital themselves, and as on assessment the patient required air-evacuation to Rockhampton and again no ambulance was available and the patient had to be transferred from Alpha Hospital to the airport by private vehicle -

Will the Minister give a genuine commitment that immediate action will be taken to provide the people of Alpha and Jericho with a secure and fully operational ambulance service at all times?

ANSWER:

I thank the Honourable Member for Gregory for his question.

I have been advised by the District Chief Executive Officer of Central West Health Service District of the following sequence of events in relation to the incident that occurred on the 4 May 2011.

The patient's son telephoned the Alpha Multipurpose Health Service (MPHS) and informed the Registered Nurse that the patient had been injured in the cattle yards and had been taken to the property home.

The Registered Nurse asked a series of questions about the injuries sustained including any obvious lacerations, fractures and any loss of consciousness. When asked if an ambulance was needed to go out to the property to bring the patient back to the Alpha MPHS, the family stated they were happy to transport the patient in their own vehicle. This was a quicker option than waiting for the ambulance to drive out to the property, due to the distance between the property and the MPHS.

There was a Queensland Health staff member on duty and available to drive the ambulance vehicle.

When the patient arrived at the MPHS at approximately 1 pm, he walked from the family vehicle to the emergency room where he was examined by the Director of Nursing and the Clinical Coordinator in Brisbane via the telehealth equipment in the emergency room.

A decision was made to have the patient transferred to Rockhampton for further investigations. This Royal Flying Doctor Service transfer was arranged for 3 pm. At this time the ambulance vehicle had been engaged to transfer a lady in suspected premature labour to Emerald Hospital, so the patient was taken by MPHS staff to the airport in a Queensland Health vehicle.

Queensland Health through Central West Health Service District will continue to provide the people of Alpha with a fully functioning Hospital Based Ambulance Service.

Ambulances services based at Jericho are the responsibility of Spiritus Nursing Service which is funded by the Department of Communities.