

Question on Notice
No. 123
Asked on 7 March 2013

MR KRAUSE asked the Minister for Health (MR SPRINGBORG)-

QUESTION:

Will the Minister outline whether the federal government's cuts to funding to the Metro South Hospital and Health Service has affected services (a) at the Beaudesert Hospital and if so, how and (b) for residents of the Beaudesert Electorate at other hospitals in the Metro South region?

ANSWER:

I thank the Honourable Member for Beaudesert for his question.

The Federal Government's \$103 million cut to health funding has caused considerable issues for service delivery. A reduction of this significance mid financial year has impacted on the time available for Hospital and Health Services to review budgets, plan and implement strategies to offset the reduction.

Following the announcement of the reduction in the Federal Government's Mid Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook (MYEFO), the Queensland Government and other state governments made extensive representations to the Federal Government on this issue. To date, the Federal Government has indicated that the reductions are not negotiable and has refused to review the methodology for calculating population growth which underpins the reductions.

On 7 February 2013, the Senate referred this issue to the Finance and Public Administration Reference Committee for inquiry. Queensland provided a submission to the inquiry outlining the impact reductions of this magnitude will have on the Hospital and Health Services. The submission also highlighted my concerns with the methodology for calculating population growth that the Federal Government had applied to the health reform funding.

The Committee released its finding in a report on 7 March 2013. This report recommends that the Federal Government reinstate health funding to the states and territories and supports the view that the basis on which the calculation of the funding cuts was made is flawed. I therefore look forward to the response from the Federal Government on the recommendations the Committee has made.

In the context of your question, the changes to Commonwealth funding have resulted in an \$18.8 million budget reduction for the Metro South Hospital and Health Service (HHS). I am advised that the Beaudesert Hospital has been excluded from these budgetary reductions at present and staff continue to work towards the re-establishment of birthing and procedural services at the hospital between now and July 2014.

In general terms, I am advised that clinicians and managers across all of the Metro South HHS are working together to determine strategies to meet the financial targets while minimising the impact on patient services.