



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**Federation Chamber**

**CONSTITUENCY STATEMENTS**

**Swan Electorate: Hospitals**

**SPEECH**

**Monday, 27 February 2012**

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

---

## SPEECH

<b>Date</b> Monday, 27 February 2012	<b>Source</b> House
<b>Page</b> 1887	<b>Proof</b> No
<b>Questioner</b>	<b>Responder</b>
<b>Speaker</b> Irons, Steve, MP	<b>Question No.</b>

**Mr IRONS** (Swan) (12:27): Last Wednesday I visited Bentley Hospital in my electorate—its antenatal unit—with the Deputy Premier of Western Australia, Dr Kim Hames, who also happens to be the health minister. I want to quote to the chamber now from Dr Hames' subsequent report to the Western Australia parliament. The reason I want to get it on the record of this parliament as well is the amount of misinformation that has been said about the hospital. Noting that fact, I think the health minister deserves to be quoted in this parliament as well. He said:

There is no question that some degree of upgrade of that obstetric facility is needed, so we will be going through, getting a report done and working out what needs to be done. However, what is clear is that there is confusion around what is going to happen to that maternity service once Fiona Stanley Hospital opens. So I will go through that again to make the intentions of this government very clear.

Under the previous government, when Hon Jim McGinty was the minister, he made the decision that when Fiona Stanley Hospital was built, the Bentley Hospital obstetric service would close and those services would be provided by the new Fiona Stanley Hospital. In opposition, we had no reason whatsoever to doubt that that was good policy. We totally disagreed with what he was going to do with obstetric services at Osborne Park Hospital and campaigned to keep them, and he subsequently changed his mind and said he would keep those. However, we were in agreement about the potential closure of Bentley obstetric services. As we moved forward, we talked a lot to the local community, particularly to Steve Irons, as the local federal member and the local mayor, and there was strong support for continuing to retain that hospital in the future. The risk in that is that a report has been done by a prominent obstetrician that lists about 1 000 deliveries a year as the ideal size for an obstetric service, which is about what is done at Osborne Park Hospital. Currently at Bentley Hospital it is about 890, which is marginally under that level. However, it is expected that when Fiona Stanley Hospital opens, that service will not be required. The commitment that we gave, I think, a year or 18 months ago, which seems to be lost in the translation somewhere, is that we will now wait and see and reconsider once Fiona Stanley Hospital is open. So we will wait until early 2014 when Fiona Stanley Hospital opens. Given that there are only 20 obstetric beds that we have not changed from the Labor Party plan at that site and that Kaleeya is proposed to be closed as an obstetric service, we will wait and see what happens. People will vote with their feet. I have said that if they continue to support the Bentley obstetric service and if the number is getting close to the 1 000 that are needed, we will reconsider and reinvest whatever dollars are required to bring that up to a high-quality obstetric service. It is silly for us to go and spend millions of dollars there now, with only two years to that decision. However, in the meantime, we will do some work to freshen up the appearance of that obstetric unit and make sure that the people going there now—the nearly 900 of them who go there during a year for their deliveries—have a quality level of service. Once again, I want to make that public. Bentley obstetric service will not definitely close when Fiona Stanley obstetric service opens.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER ( Ms AE Burke ): Order! In accordance with standing order 193 the time for constituency statements has concluded.