

## **Legislative Council Thursday 30 April, 2020**

**Ms FORREST to LEADER of the GOVERNMENT in the  
LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, Mrs HISCUTT**



### **Questions:**

Regarding the North West COVID-19 outbreak:

- 1 For those in mandated quarantine either as COVID-19 positive individuals and/or as a NWRH NWPH related worker;
  - a) How was/is the mental health and welfare of these people assessed and supported; and
  - b) How is their personal safety assessed and supported?
- 2 How were communication processes within the health system and government related to this outbreak managed and communicated?
- 3 How were health care staff in the NW supported prior to the shutdown of both Burnie hospitals; and
  - a) Were concerns raised by staff at NWPH and NWRH addressed in a timely fashion; and
  - b) If so, how were these concerns addressed?
- 4 What resourcing for contact tracing and investigation was put in place and how was this configured?

### **Answers:**

- 1) I am advised that the quarantining process includes daily contact from Public Health Services, who are able to arrange for any support or assistance required.

The Public Health Hotline on 1800 671 738 is also available to support any healthcare worker or other Tasmanian while in quarantine.

Staff continued to be paid as normal during this time (including all loadings and allowances), and accommodation was provided for those staff who were not able to quarantine at their home.

- 2) The THS has been communicating regularly with staff via direct emails and other messages, especially when major events occurred such as closing the North West Regional Hospital.

- 3) THS Staff have been provided with resources and support since the commencement of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Government expects that any concerns raised internally would be taken seriously and appropriately addressed within the THS.
- 4) An investigation was immediately commenced to identifying and contact any person who has had close contact with the staff, both inside and outside of the hospital.

The Tasmanian Health Service moved immediately to establish an Incident Management Team as part of this process, which worked to ascertain any person who may have been at risk of being exposed to coronavirus at the hospital, and to ensure necessary actions were taken.

A copy of the COVID-19 North West Regional Hospital Outbreak Interim Report has been made available publicly.