

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

C346

QUESTION WITHOUT NOTICE (Of which some notice has been given)

Tuesday, 24 March 2015

Hon Robin Chappie to the Leader of the House representing the Premier.

I refer to the Premier's statement on Thursday 19th March that: "in 2013 there were 39 cases of gonorrhoea in Aboriginal children ... aged from 10 to 14", and I ask:

1. Will the Premier please table the report from which he has derived these statistics?
2. How many of these children were from remote Aboriginal communities, how many were from towns and cities, and in which region(s) of WA are the relevant communities, towns and cities located?
3. Will the Premier close all of the communities and towns where the cases of gonorrhoea in children aged 10 to 14 were discovered, and if not why not and what measures will be taken to protect children in the future?

I thank the Hon. Member for some notice of this question.

1-3. The figure of 39 cases of gonorrhoea in 2013 for Aboriginal children aged from 10 to 14 compared to none for non-Aboriginal children is for the Kimberley region. This data has been provided by the Department of Health. There is difficulty in distinguishing cases residing in remote communities vs townships in remote regions because, from the point-of-view of the STI notification data because people who live in small/remote communities often have their addresses recorded as the nearest town (e.g. "via Fitzroy Crossing", "via Halls Creek, etc) or a PO box number based in the post office of the nearest township.

Also, some populations move frequently between towns and small communities so a given address on the case report form does not necessarily constitute the location where they spend most of their time.

The State Government is about to begin a significant reform program regarding remote communities which will focus on better outcomes in health, education, safety and job opportunities for Aboriginal people.

