



Minister for Health

Media Statement

24/2/10

New service delivers health care in the home.

A new service launched today by Health Minister Kim Hames will help up to 500 elderly and chronically-ill patients each day to stay out of hospital by providing high-quality health care in the comfort of the patient's own home.

Dr Hames said Silver Chain Nursing Association's new Home Hospital service was the centrepiece of the Liberal-National Government's \$84million Friend in Need Emergency (FINE) scheme.

"The FINE scheme is a State Government election promise which aims to assist people with complex and ongoing health care needs to remain in their home rather than visiting emergency departments or being admitted to hospital," he said.

"By providing care in the patient's home we enhance their level of comfort and security and relieve pressure on our hospitals, supporting the reforms we are putting in place through the Four Hour Rule Program.

"These reforms will help our hospital and health services to meet the challenge of an ageing population and the increasing demand for health care.

"Home Hospital includes a new and innovative 24-hour-a-day Priority Response Assessment (PRA) service.

"PRA teams, led by clinical nurse practitioners, respond and attend to patients within a four-hour time-frame, providing assessment and care in the patient's home.

"Home Hospital also includes a major enhancement of Silver Chain's existing community nursing, post-acute care and community-managed hospital in the home services.

"With FINE scheme funding, the scope of all of these services has been expanded so they can help more patients right across the metropolitan area.

"Patients with chronic disease or complex care needs may still need to visit a hospital on occasion, but by offering some services at home we can reduce the number of visits the patient has to make.

"Care will be provided in consultation with the patient's GP and hospital medical staff and will only be delivered in the home where it is safe and effective to do so."

When fully operational in 2010-11, total Government funding to Silver Chain for Home Hospital services will reach \$23.3million.

The Minister said the launch of the Home Hospital service was an important milestone for the FINE scheme, and in the partnership between Silver Chain and the State Government.

“Silver Chain is one of the biggest providers of community, clinical and health care services in Australia,” he said.

“The State Government already funds Silver Chain to provide Home and Community Care, palliative care, and health services in rural and remote areas.

“I am very pleased Silver Chain is now a key partner with the Government in delivering enhanced, innovative in-home care through the FINE scheme and Home Hospital.”

Media contact: Peta Rule - 9222 8788 or 0428 923 661

You can subscribe to have media releases emailed automatically from the Government’s website: <http://www.mediastatements.wa.gov.au>