

**Question on Notice
No. 215
Asked on 27 April 2004**

MR COPELAND asked the Minister for Health (MR NUTTALL)-

QUESTION:

Will he advise the waiting times for specialist appointments in each health district, by specialty area?

ANSWER:

Queensland Health does not currently collect waiting times for specialist outpatient appointments in any consistent manner as a result of the significant development work being undertaken by the department to comply with the Commonwealth Government's National Minimum Data Set due for implementation in July 2005. The National Minimum Data Set will ensure consistency of reporting across all States and Territories.

Implementation costs for the establishment of the new data collection to comply with Commonwealth reporting requirements has been estimated at \$1.2 million, with \$300,000 ongoing recurrent costs.

In the interim, Queensland Health has undertaken a body of work to ensure a consistent approach to the management of specialist outpatient waiting lists including establishment of the Specialist Outpatient Advisory Committee. Key outcomes from this committee include:

- development of the *Guidelines for the Management of Specialist Outpatient Clinic Waiting Lists* in 2001;
- recent development of the *Policy Framework for Specialist Outpatient Services* (currently in the process of being published); and
- promotion of best practice in the coordination and management of specialist outpatient services, patient access, and waiting lists.