

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
Question On Notice

Tuesday, 11 October 2016

4474. Hon Robin Chappie to the Minister for Planning representing the Minister for Health

I refer to this flu and cold season and FIFO workers, and I ask:

- (a) given the effect that this season has had on the FIFO workforce, are health controls in place to ensure that people in the contagious stages of flu or colds do not travel on commercial plane flights containing other workers;
- (b) if yes to (a), what are they, and how are they administered;
- (c) if no to (a), does the Minister or Department of Health provide any guidelines to either airlines or companies on procedures to minimise transfer of flu or colds within the FIFO workforce;
- (d) if yes to (c), what are these procedures;
- (e) if no to (c), why not;
- (f) does the department have any figures associated with lost time due to this cold and flu season amongst the FIFO workforce;
- (g) if yes to (f), will the Minister table them; and
- (h) if no to (f), why not?

Answer

(a-e) The Department of Health's health promotion messages to the community and employers provide guidance on respiratory hygiene measures to reduce the risk of transmission of respiratory viruses.

Personal hygiene measures that are widely recommended by the Department of Health to reduce the risk of respiratory virus transmission include the following:

- Covering your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.
- Throwing used tissues in the bin.
- Washing your hands often with soap and water or use antibacterial hand sanitisers, especially after you cough.
- Trying to avoid close contact with people who have flu symptoms.
- If you have the flu, staying home from work or school and limit your contact with other people.

The Department of Health also promotes the benefits of influenza vaccine widely to the community and employers.

(f) No.

(g) Not applicable.

(h) The Department of Health does not have access to information on absenteeism in the FIFO workforce. Relevant employers may have this information.

