

**Question on Notice
No. 47
Asked on 13 February 2008**

MR SPRINGBORG asked the Minister for Health (MR ROBERTSON)-

QUESTION:

With reference to diagnostic imaging services, including MRI, CT and ultrasound, will he outline (a) what level of diagnostic imaging services, including MRI, CT and ultrasound, were outsourced by Queensland Health major teaching hospitals in Brisbane to private providers in the first half of the current financial year and 2006–07 and 2005–06 (reported separately) and (b) the number and value of services outsourced individually to private providers during that period (reported separately) and on what basis these services were allocated?

ANSWER:

During the past three financial periods diagnostic imaging services were outsourced by Queensland Health major teaching hospitals in Brisbane to private providers as follows:

	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
The Prince Charles Hospital	Nil	Nil	Nil
Royal Children's Hospital	One paediatric MRI to Queensland X-ray at a cost of \$1,024. Four PET Scans to Southern X-Ray at a cost of \$3,200.	Nil	Nil
Princess Alexandra Hospital	Nil	Nil	<u>Outsourced</u> Queensland X-Ray reported 2,647 general radiography examinations at a cost of \$38,381.50. QScan Radiology Clinics reported 2,500 general radiography examinations at a cost of \$37,500.
Royal Brisbane & Women's Hospital	Nil	Nil	<u>Outsourced</u> QScan Radiology Clinics performed and reported 173 CT examinations and 344 MRI examinations at a cost of \$56,256.55 and \$80,128.25 respectively. Savage X-ray performed and reported 27 CT interventional exams at a cost of \$13,113.16.

Outsourcing of one paediatric MRI case to Queensland X-Ray at Greenslopes in 2005 occurred prior to the installation of the MRI scanner at Royal Children's Hospital. At this time Queensland X-Ray was the only local provider able to perform paediatric MRI cases under general anaesthetic. The PET Scans were outsourced to Southern X-Ray prior to the commissioning of the PET Service at Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital.

Outsourcing of some general radiography reporting for Princess Alexandra Hospital in 2007-08 to Queensland X-Ray and QScan Radiology Clinics was an extension of a contract for reporting services resulting from a public tender for the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital in 2006. A total number of 5,147 general radiography examinations were outsourced; 14% of the total workload for this modality.

Outsourcing of some MRI and CT at the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital in 2007-08 occurred on a clinically urgent basis pending the development of a formal market tender. Local private radiology practices, including Queensland Diagnostic Imaging, Queensland X-Ray and Southernnex Imaging Group were invited to indicate their capacity to provide the required services. QScan Radiology Clinics and Savage X-ray were selected on the basis of price, locality, patient access and capacity to provide the service. A total number of 544 examinations were outsourced, 3% of the total workload for these modalities.

On 12 February 2008, the office of the Federal Health Minister confirmed the expansion of Medicare Eligible MRI Services in Queensland with licences issued for the following locations, Bundaberg, Cairns and Rockhampton.

In addition, Queensland Health has recently installed/in the process of installing the following major items of medical imaging equipment into its facilities:

- MRI at Logan Hospital opened in April 2006;
- Dual Source Computed Tomography (CT) Scanner commenced operation at The Prince Charles Hospital in late August 2007;
- Angiography suite commenced operation at Redcliffe Hospital in December 2007;
- Bundaberg Hospital commenced operation of its Fluoroscopy unit in December 2007;
- MRI scanner upgrade occurred at the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital in September 2007;
- 3D Vascular Image Intensifier commenced operation at the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital in September 2007;
- Computerised Radiography (CR) Systems are currently being installed to replace wet film processing at all Queensland Health medical imaging sites with completion expected June 2008;
- Queensland Health has placed an order to procure a total of eight fixed Digital Radiography X-Ray units. These systems are expected to commence operation between early and mid 2008.