

If they're admitting it, it must be bad

Wow, we don't often get a system head honcho doing a bit of a mea culpa.

WA Health director-general Shirley Bowen's admission of issues in the State hospital system (*News*, 1/8) is just confirming that, yes, Houston we have a problem.

This has been obvious for years. Successive government talking heads have given various reasons for increasing hospital ramping numbers, but in the meantime things have got steadily worse.

We have new, eye-wateringly expensive roads and other trinkets either in place or planned, but ramping is still just being looked at.

"Evaluating and looking at the whole incident of the patient's journey" as Health Minister Meredith Hammat put it.

And those old people are also causing issues in the system — another story waiting in the wings. What was that saying about Rome burning while Nero fiddles?

Dirk Botje, Bull Creek

Let Zempilas fix it

One of the election promises Mark McGowan made before the 2017 poll was to sort out the ambulance ramping issue, but under Health Minister Roger Cook it became worse.

Now, as Premier, Roger Cook wants to spend \$66 million bringing the NRL to Western Australia. Obviously the WA health system is not on his list of priorities. We can only hope Basil Zempilas becomes Premier at the next election and the health system becomes workable once again.

Clive Cooper, Ocean Reef

Distressing disrepair

Having just experienced a family member being admitted to Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital through its emergency department, we would like to sincerely thank the medical



Shirley Bowen

and support staff for their care and dedication.

However we wish we could give the same appreciation of the building, fixtures and fittings. They are all well past their use-by date — worn out, dirty, overcrowded, noisy, and a very stressful environment for the staff to work in and patients to recover well. The parking is a nightmare, to say the least.

So Roger Cook and Rita Saffioti, our plea to you is please spend our money on fixing the public health system to a standard all West Australians are entitled to and deserve — not on a motorplex, ferries, a rugby team, bare knuckle fighting, change of public holidays or any other distractions you can think up.

Ken & Sue May, Duncraig

No place like home

Until the Federal Government gets serious about home-care packages and aged-care bed shortages, people will continue to stay in hospital beds to the detriment of everyone needing urgent care across Australia.

Jim Benson-Lidholm, Greenwood

Overspends inevitable

Why all the fuss about cost overruns on large Government projects? It happens to people all the time.

Have you ever put your car in for a service, expecting to pay the normal service fee, and got a phone call saying something

else had been found that needed fixing? An oil leak, or faulty brakes, or an oil filter change. Something that adds to your bill. Would you rather say: "Don't fix the brakes, or the oil leak, I'd rather drive an unsafe car then pay the extra to fix it?"

Of course not. When you take into account the cost of Government projects, the overrun costs are much greater, but I think we'd still rather have a safe Metronet than save money.

E. Gurr, Warnbro

Future shock awaits

The West's headline "The kids we fail" (*News*, 25/7) should have read, "The kids we pass".

It is the kids who are allowed to progress into the next year without having mastered the previous year's work who are causing the problem.

As students progress through their schooling, the problem escalates.

While teachers are trying to bring lagging students up to standard, they neglect the students who are at the right level. Also those students who are behind and have no hope of keeping up, respond with disruptive poor behaviours rather than look dumb. More teachers' time lost in discipline rather than teaching.

There is nothing wrong with the standard of our teachers. They are working within a system designed to fail.

The Education Department has a lot to answer for, as does the Minister for Education, along with previous ministers for education.

No kid fails — until they leave school and hit the real world. Here employers won't tolerate poor attendance, disruptive behaviour, disrespect and a low standard of education.

Failure hits hard because that's never happened before.
Wayne Fletcher, Toodyay