HEARING: ORANGE, WEDNESDAY 2 NOVEMBER 2016

NSW Health (Western NSW Local Health District) – Scott McLachlan, Rob Zielinski, Ruth Jones, Di Wykes, Sue Patterson, Catherine Nowlan

Questions taken on notice during the hearing

The Hon. TREVOR KHAN: I am not seeking to quibble with the Chair and I am not seeking to quibble with you, but what I am interested in, in part, is the veracity of some of the evidence that we have received. Dr Grygiel says everyone signed consent forms. Now whether that was informed consent or not we can worry about later, but what we want to know is when Dr Grygiel comes before us and says everyone signed a consent form, is that accurate or is it not; is it truthful or is it not? Those are the questions we have to have answered. Ms Jones was there at the time. Can you tell us whether consent forms were signed?

Ms JONES: All our patients when they first were attending an appointment with Dr Grygiel signed a consent for release of information and that enabled us to make referrals to the multidisciplinary team and for anyone else they may need in their care. There were no chemotherapy consent forms that were signed that we have any knowledge of.

Mr JEREMY BUCKINGHAM: From any practitioner?

Ms JONES: Dr Grygiel was our only medical oncologist in Bathurst and Orange.

Mr JEREMY BUCKINGHAM: But were there other oncologists that were practising in the LHD and did they have consent forms?

Ms JONES: Not that I am aware of. I would have to take that on notice because it is not that I am aware of.

The Hon. TREVOR KHAN: There were two questions there. Were there other oncologists practising in the area was question one; question two is did they have consent forms? Your answer relates to the first part or to the second part of the question?

Ms JONES: It relates to the second part of the question.

ANSWER:

Dr Grygiel was the only medical oncologist in Bathurst and Orange at that time. Medical Oncologists from Royal Prince Alfred Hospital provided a service to Dubbo during that period.

The Local Health District ensures that it complies with the NSW Policy Directive, Consent to Medical Treatment. As outlined in evidence from Dr Zielinski, consent is a very complex, involved process that goes beyond the use of specific forms. The District is currently developing a chemotherapy/immunotherapy specific consent form for patients to sign prior to commencing treatment. The plan is that when the document is completed it will be recorded in the patient’s record in MOSAIQ®.
The Hon. WALT SECORD: What is the status of the implementation of the 16 recommendations in the Currow report?
Mr McLACHLAN: We are making good progress on all of those recommendations. We have provided an update just recently to the Ministry of Health. We are having monthly meetings with the Ministry of Health to update them and make sure that there is strong governance around the implementation of those. I would be happy to ask Di Wykes to talk to the implementation actions if that would be helpful.
The Hon. WALT SECORD: Will you provide the Committee with the most recent update?
Mr McLACHLAN: Yes, certainly. Do you want us to talk to that now or to provide the document?
The Hon. WALT SECORD: Yes.

ANSWER:
As noted in the NSW Health submission, Western NSW Local Health District is due to report on progress in December 2016.

Ms JONES: He was the only oncologist for Bathurst and Orange. The section 122 inquiry gave us a number of groups of people for which they asked us to provide the names and we provided that information back in April. They selected people for interview and let us know in May who they would like to interview.
Mr JEREMY BUCKINGHAM: Okay. That is interesting. Could you provide those names to the inquiry?
Ms JONES: The list of names submitted?
Mr JEREMY BUCKINGHAM: Yes.
Ms JONES: Absolutely.

ANSWER:
The Western NSW Local Health District has ascertained that one of the reasons people felt that they could come forward generally and talk to the Section 122 Inquiry was because there was a commitment to respect the confidentiality of individuals and it was made clear that their names would not be made public.