

ANSWERS TO QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE BY MISSION AUSTRALIA AT LAW AND SAFETY COMMITTEE HEARING, 30 April 2018

Question #1:

Mr EDMOND ATALLA: The Committee has heard questions about expanding who can refer people to the Youth on Track program. Is it currently running at capacity, and if there were more referrals to the program would there be resources to cope with that, or does that require additional resources?

Dr TADROS: I think we would probably need to go and do a bit of analysis around that—not just for Youth on Track that Mission Australia delivers, because obviously there are other organisations that deliver it—just to work out what was the key performance indicator, what was the staff-to-client ratio, either that we tendered for or that was agreed to, and work out whether or not we are exceeding that. Because if we are not, certainly there is a capacity to take it on. If there is, then we just need to adjust—

Mr EDMOND ATALLA: Are you running at capacity on this program at the moment?

Dr TADROS: I do not think we are in all the areas, but I would have to take that question on notice and come back.

Response:

Currently additional resources are not required to maintain the areas where we operate Youth on Track. There is additional capacity in some of our sites to take more referrals, however if the referral system was changed, the Department would need to consider resourcing and program implications.

Question #2:

The CHAIR: Legal Aid has told the Committee that Youth on Track employs the Changing Habits and Reaching Targets, approach, and that it is not clear that this approach is effective with Aboriginal young people. Do you have any comments on that?

Dr TADROS: I think we have only delivered it for a short time so I would probably have to take that on notice.

Response:

Our staff report that CHART is being used effectively with Aboriginal young people, however in some cases it is adapted through conversations rather than worksheets to better suit the young person's

needs. Other creative strategies have also been tried including cultural painting to engage Aboriginal young people while keeping the integrity and fundamental core process of the CHART program.

Question #3:

Ms JENNY LEONG: You mentioned one that is no longer going on, another that is at risk and others that are currently being funded that people think are great things being rolled out. I am looking at the person you said was taking notes. It would be great to get specific recommendations on what those programs are that you believe are successful that are not continuing and those that you are running in one community that could be effective in other areas. It would be helpful to get a sense of that.

Dr TADROS: Sure. We have referenced it in bits and pieces throughout the submission but we will draw it out to make it clearer.

Response:

Youth Crime Prevention Project – South West Sydney (funding ending)

The youth crime prevention project provided services for young people aged 10-18 with a median age of 14. In 2016-17, a total of 56 young people were case managed through this program. The young people were supported: to remain or re-engage with school, further education and employment; to build positive family relationships; with accommodation; to access mental health supports; with court support; and with recreation.

Pasifika (NSW, now ceased) - Evaluation

The Pasifika project operated in NSW from June 2005 until June 2009. During this period the project supported more than 250 Pacific young people who voluntarily participated in the program. An external evaluation¹ found that the program achieved impressive reductions in re-offending with some 65% of participants not re-offending within 12 months of the program. Other important outcomes achieved included family reconnection, re-engagement with school, and other training and employment outcomes. A measure of the program's success was its 'community access' component, which saw the peers and siblings of young people referred to the service actively seek to participate, without formal referrals from police. A critical success factor of the project was the initial connection with an experienced case worker who engaged with the client about their goals and objectives. This case worker also assisted participants to 'reframe' their approach to and their participation in programs and services if this was considered necessary.

The program proved to be cost effective at approximately \$2500 per individual for the duration of their three to six month involvement with the project (representing a cost of

¹Conducted by ARTD Consultants (full reference ARTD Consultants 2007. *Evaluation of the NSW youth partnership with pacific communities 2005–2007*. Final report to the Implementation Committee.
<http://www.sydneyr.det.nsw.edu.au/Equity/documents/TSandR/FinalReportYPPCEvaluationARTD310707.pdf>)

\$13.75 to \$27.50 per day²). This compares very favourably to the average real operating expenditure per prisoner per day around that time (2007-08) where the national cost was \$220 per day³.

Further Information:

Link between justice and homelessness for young people.

Our position paper and background paper on homelessness have more detail on young people's homelessness and the links between contact with the justice system and homelessness

<https://www.missionaustralia.com.au/publications/position-statements/homelessness/469-mission-australia-s-review-of-homelessness-2015/file>

<https://www.missionaustralia.com.au/publications/position-statements/homelessness/468-mission-australia-s-action-plan-to-reduce-and-prevent-homelessness-2015/file>

More information on the Everybody's Home campaign can be found here:

www.everybodyshome.com.au

Rehabilitation and detoxification for young people

Our recent submissions on rehabilitation and detoxification may also be of interest in relation to the lack of youth specific detoxification and rehabilitation facilities.

<https://www.missionaustralia.com.au/publications/policy-submissions/other/754-inquiry-into-the-provision-of-drug-rehabilitation-services-in-regional-rural-and-remote-nsw/file>

<https://www.missionaustralia.com.au/publications/policy-submissions/other/361-combatting-ice-in-our-community/file>

² Calculation based upon an average daily cost over either 26 or 13 weeks duration with the cheaper rate associated with the longer duration.

³ Table 8A.9, Real net operating expenditure, per prisoner per day (2009-10 dollars). Chapter 8 – Corrective Services