

PARLIAMENT OF NSW SOUTH WALES

JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE ON SENTENCING OF CHILD SEXUAL ASSAULT OFFENDERS

Inquiry into the sentencing of child sexual assault offenders

Justice Health and Forensic Mental Health Network's responses to questions taken on notice

Question taken on notice – Page 4

Reverend the Hon. FRED NILE: But while they are in custody, what percentage of prisoners would commence that treatment? It sounds like it would be small?

Dr MACKINNON: I cannot give you the exact figure, I am sorry. I can return to the Committee with that percentage figure but it would be very low indeed.

Answer: Justice Health & Forensic Mental Health Network does not record data on the number of patients receiving anti-libidinal treatment for paraphilia. A review of the Network's pharmacy information from 2012 to 2013 indicates fifteen custodial patients were prescribed *cyproterone*, a medication which is used to suppress libido, however it is also prescribed for treatment of a number of other health issues.

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CHAIR: We heard evidence about the number of psychologists and psychiatrists available. From a health point of view, what recommendations or advice could you give the Committee to help build that resource and how would it be utilised most effectively?

Ms BABINEAU: I would be happy to take that question on notice because it is about training and it is a much bigger area because you start now and have outcomes probably for six or eight years. I certainly would be happy to take that question on notice.

Answer: Increased numbers of medical graduates are starting to address shortages in many specialties. The challenge is now to ensure that the workforce is distributed across specialties and locations to meet service needs.

The NSW Ministry of Health has undertaken workforce modelling focusing on medical workforce requirements for New South Wales. This modelling has resulted in the Psychiatry workforce as being classified as a "Major Priority" for further support and growth. In response, the NSW Ministry of Health is currently undertaking a project to develop career information for medical students and junior medical officers in order to

encourage greater interest in careers and locations identified as priorities for further growth.

The NSW Psychiatry Training Network is managed by NSW Health Education and Training Institute (HETI) to improve coordination and quality for Psychiatry specialty training and includes a principle of networking large teaching hospitals with rural training positions to provide both diverse training experiences but also an experience of rural practice. The Psychiatry Training Network is supported by over \$2.5 million per annum (2012-13 figure). This is the most funding received by any of the NSW Health specialty training networks.

From 2008 to 2012, there was an increase of 29% in Psychiatry Trainees in NSW (309 to 398 *Medical Training Review Panel – 12th Report* and *Medical Training Review Panel - 16th Report*). Given that Psychiatry specialty training takes a minimum of 60 months full-time equivalent (FTE) to complete, the full effect of the increase in trainees may not be felt in the specialty workforce until 2017.

The Health Workforce Australia *Australian Workforce Series: Psychologists in Focus* (March 2014) indicates that there has been a three-fold increase in the Psychologist workforce between 1996–2011. Current supply through universities has increased but it is unclear if this will be sufficient due to changes in the nature of workforce, changes in work patterns, access to Medicare billing and increasing service demand from services such as mental health.

Psychologists can obtain general registration with the Psychology Board of Australia through the completion of an accredited program of study followed by completion of a period of supervised practice.

Psychologists may also be required to undertake the National Psychology Exam prior to obtaining general registration.

Psychologists may undertake clinical work in both the private and public sector. However, the majority of psychologists work in the private sector (Health Workforce Australia *Australian Workforce Series: Psychologists in Focus* (March 2014)).