

Dosing errors – Cumberland and Macquarie Hospitals

Transcript p2

The Hon. LYNDIA VOLTZ: Minister, are you aware of the medicine dosing errors occurring at the Cumberland and Macquarie hospitals?

Ms PRU GOWARD: That is an operational question, so I would like to ask Ms Koff to answer it.

Ms KOFF: Could you repeat the question? Are they in mental health facilities?

The Hon. LYNDIA VOLTZ: Are you aware of the medicine dosing errors occurring at the Cumberland and Macquarie hospitals?

Ms KOFF: No, I am not aware. I will take it on notice.

The Hon. LYNDIA VOLTZ: You are not aware that there may be 20 to 30 errors occurring each week?

Ms KOFF: I have not seen any such report.

The Hon. LYNDIA VOLTZ: Was the Cumberland mental health hospital allowed to use unique medical charts rather than the National Inpatient Medication Chart [NIMC]?

Ms KOFF: I will have to take that one on notice. I am not aware of the medication chart used at Cumberland Hospital.

ANSWER:

Cumberland Hospital

The Western Sydney Local Health District Mental Health Service implemented the National Inpatient Medication Chart for long stay patients on 30 May 2016.

Business rules and education packages on the use of the chart were developed by the Western Sydney Local Health District Mental Health Service and approved by the District's Drug Committee in August 2016, to ensure consistent and safe clinical and business practice across the mental health service. These business rules have been distributed to all nursing and medical staff within the mental health service.

Monitoring of the implementation continues through the mental health service's Safe Use of Medicines Committee.

Macquarie Hospital

Macquarie Hospital utilises the National Inpatient Medication Chart for all inpatients within Macquarie Hospital.

Dosing errors – Cumberland and Macquarie Hospitals

Transcript p4 -5

The Hon. LYNDIA VOLTZ: Ms Koff, I will go back to my original question, which is whether you are aware of the medical dosing errors at Cumberland and Macquarie hospitals. Given what you have just heard, what are the clinical risks arising from these errors?

Ms KOFF: All medication errors are required to be reported on our incident information monitoring system. There is a vigilance required. It is important to understand that medication errors cover a range of areas in the patient journey. It can be prescribing errors, it can be dispensing errors, it can be administration errors. It is a journey of a pathway for medical administration and pharmaceutical prescription. We take medication errors very seriously. They are one of the key priorities in the national health quality standards to minimise across the country. As I mentioned, the electronic medication prescribing system that we are installing, we believe, is an important aspect to reduce medication errors across the State.

The Hon. LYNDIA VOLTZ: Minister, given my original question relating to medicine dosing errors, is it a concern that you and your staff have said that they are not aware of it, yet we have a report that has clearly outlined problems within the chart system?

Ms PRU GOWARD: I think the department has adequately answered your questions.

The Hon. LYNDIA VOLTZ: Even though they are saying they are not aware of it and I had to read from the report?

Ms PRU GOWARD: I think Dr Wright has explained it to you and Ms Koff has also explained how errors in medication are managed and that there is a national approach to this.

The Hon. LYNDIA VOLTZ: When can we see these recommendations implemented?

Ms PRU GOWARD: I will have to take—

The Hon. LYNDIA VOLTZ: You will have to take that on notice?

Ms PRU GOWARD: No, I can take the advice of the department.

Ms KOFF: Yes, take it on notice. We have not seen the report.

The Hon. LYNDIA VOLTZ: I am asking you, Minister, when will you implement these recommendations. As the Minister responsible for the delivery of these services on behalf of the people of New South Wales, when will you implement the recommendations?

Ms PRU GOWARD: I will take that on notice.

ANSWER:

I am advised:

The independent review was undertaken in the Western Sydney Local Health District in May 2015. Eleven of the 12 recommendations have been actioned by the Western Sydney Local Health District Mental Health Service.

The outstanding recommendation is to review level of staffing and the roles of pharmacy and allied health, which is currently being progressed as part of the District Business Cycle and Clinical Services Planning.

Animals in medical research

Transcript p5

The Hon. LYNDA VOLTZ: Minister, what is the wastage figure for cats and dogs that have been euthanased for the purposes of medical research?

Ms PRU GOWARD: That is a question I will ask Ms Koff to answer.

Ms KOFF: I will pass to Dr Kerry Chant, the chief health officer responsible for research.

The Hon. LYNDA VOLTZ: Back to the front line.

Dr CHANT: I will have to take that on notice. I can add that there is an animal ethical process that is in place to approve research on animals and a monitoring regime. I would have to take the specifics of the exact wastage on notice and I would also be happy to provide the animal ethics framework that governs appropriate clinical use of animals for research purposes.

ANSWER:

This matter falls within the portfolio of the Hon Niall Blair MLC, Minister for Primary Industries and Minister for Lands and Water and this includes responsibility for monitoring figures for animals that have been euthanised for the purposes of medical research.

The husbandry, monitoring, breeding and use in research of animals in NSW must comply with all relevant legislation, including the *NSW Animal Research Act 1985*, *NSW Animal Research Regulation 2010* and the Australian Code for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes 2013.

Animals in medical research

Transcript p5

The Hon. LYNDIA VOLTZ: It is true, is it not, that the Medical Research Support Program [MRSP] is the major source of infrastructure funding for independent medical research institutes in New South Wales?

Dr CHANT: The Medical Research Support Program is the major source—it is a contributor to the funding, so medical research institutes receive philanthropic donations. They receive infrastructure funding in the form of MRSP, but also achieve grant funding from the Commonwealth through a variety of grant programs, particularly the National Health and Medical Research Council [NHMRC].

The Hon. LYNDIA VOLTZ: It is interesting that you dispute whether they are a contributor or a major source because your own website says that they are a major source.

Dr CHANT: I agree that they are a major source and the increase in the MRSP has been significant. There have been significant investments and increases in funding around the MRSP. I have got some additional information around the governance of the animal testing if you would like me to take you through that?

The Hon. LYNDIA VOLTZ: Only if it answers the question I have asked you, which is what are the wastage figures.

Dr CHANT: In respect of that, I will have to take it on notice.

The Hon. LYNDIA VOLTZ: Does it have how many cats and dogs have been offered to be rehomed under the program and how many guinea pigs and mice have been rehomed?

Dr CHANT: Again, I would have to take that on notice.

The Hon. LYNDIA VOLTZ: How many primates in New South Wales are used for the purpose of medical research?

Dr CHANT: Again, I would have to take that on notice.

ANSWER:

This matter falls within the portfolio of the Hon Niall Blair MLC, Minister for Primary Industries and Minister for Lands and Water and this includes responsibility for monitoring figures for animals that have been utilised for the purposes of medical research.

The husbandry, monitoring, breeding and use in research of animals in NSW must comply with all relevant legislation, including the *NSW Animal Research Act 1985*, *NSW Animal Research Regulation 2010* and the Australian Code for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes 2013.

The Federal Government requires that the use of non-human primates in research funded by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) be ethically reviewed and approved by an Animal Ethics Committee, and comply with the above legislation. NHMRC also requires compliance with NHMRC's Policy on the care and use of non-human primates for scientific purposes.

Any research involving non-human primates must be approved by an Animal Ethics Committee before it begins. The Animal Ethics Committee must be satisfied that:

- the use of non-human primates is justified;
- there is no alternative to the use of non-human primates;
- the minimum numbers of non-human primates are used, and
- adverse impact on the non-human primates is minimised.

Animals in medical research

Transcript p6

The Hon. LYNDIA VOLTZ: You would possibly also need to take this on notice. How many other instances of xenotransplantation have been undertaken? How much funding for the purpose of medical research has the New South Wales Government provided to organisations undertaking xenotransplantation?

Dr CHANT: I am happy to take that on notice.

The Hon. LYNDIA VOLTZ: Do you know how many medical research experiments in total are being conducted on primates in New South Wales?

Dr CHANT: At any one point in time there would be a range of research. I would have to take that on notice.

The Hon. LYNDIA VOLTZ: Could you also take on notice how many, in total, would have subjected the research animals to the threshold of minor pain. I will go back to some questions on other issues.

ANSWER:

The matters of xenotransplantation and the numbers of medical research experiments fall within the portfolio of the Hon Niall Blair MLC, Minister for Primary Industries and Minister for Lands and Water.

The husbandry, monitoring, breeding and use in research of animals in NSW must comply with all relevant legislation, including the *NSW Animal Research Act 1985*, *NSW Animal Research Regulation 2010* and the Australian Code for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes 2013.

NSW Health provides funding to independent medical research institutes in NSW through the Medical Research Support Program (MRSP). Funding from the MRSP supports the indirect costs of research for these institutes. Competitive grants in this context are primarily awarded through the Federal Government, and reporting regarding the use of animals in these projects is the responsibility of the National and Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC), not NSW Health.

The Federal Government requires that the use of non-human primates in research funded by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) be ethically reviewed and approved by an Animal Ethics Committee, and comply with the above legislation. NHMRC also requires compliance with NHMRC's policy on the care and use of non-human primates for scientific purposes.

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Animals in medical research

Transcript p10

Dr CHANT: Perhaps I can talk to the general processes. We do not really want to repeat research that is redundant research. Researchers want to add new pieces of information to research. It is not in the interests of researchers to replicate things when they could be moving to the next phase in the clinical research. It goes to the visibility of the fact that those studies have been done and it goes to the lag in the publication of that data for scientific purposes and the visibility people might have of those pieces of research. I would generally say that scientists network actively internationally—and we are promoting this actively. Medical and scientific research now more than ever is an international pursuit. I suspect that people working on the cutting edge of drug development or interventions involving testing on animals are very connected. Can I absolutely say that they have found out everything that may have been going on internationally? No. But I think it would be in their interest to find out that prior—

The Hon. MARK PEARSON: Not necessarily, if you are seeking funding for a research proposal. You might even not want to find out that it has been done somewhere else, because there is a lot of pressure to seek funding for your research proposals. My question is saying that we really need to look at the Animal Research Act to make sure that it is an absolute requirement and punishable if you have not sought and investigated all research around the world to ensure that you are not repeating something, or even if you are slightly amending it, to find out whether it is really necessary. I might leave it there because time is short.

Dr CHANT: Perhaps I could just answer that. The funding bodies, in terms of the scientific review of pieces of research, have a range of experts who provide advice. Clearly the relevance and the newness or how a piece of research adds to a new body of evidence will be a matter for consideration. Funding bodies will not want to fund research that has been done before. I am happy to take that on notice and think about it in the context of my representation on NHMRC.

The Hon. MARK PEARSON: Thank you. My next question relates to a xenotransplantation experiment of a pig's liver put into a baboon, as referred to by the Hon. Lynda Voltz. This experiment happened not under the radar of the animal research regulatory authorities. That begs the question: Should the Animal Research Review Panel be given powers to do unannounced assessments of and investigations into animal research facilities? At the moment the panel does not have those powers so that it has to give notice of a visit to or an investigation into a research facility. Having those powers would have captured that particular experiment that occurred without approval.

Dr CHANT: I would be very happy to investigate the circumstances and liaise with my colleagues in the Department of Primary Industries in relation to any investigation or otherwise around that incident and provide the information back.

ANSWER:

This matter falls within the portfolio of the Hon Niall Blair MLC, Minister for Primary Industries and Minister for Lands and Water and should be referred accordingly.

Animals in medical research

Transcript p11

The Hon. LYNDA VOLTZ: Minister, the Premier said, "As a humane and responsible government, we are left with no acceptable course of action except to close this industry down", when talking about the greyhound industry. Given that action, will you now legislate to ensure that no greyhounds are used in medical research?

Ms PRU GOWARD: I will have to take that on notice; that would be a matter for the Cabinet.

The Hon. LYNDA VOLTZ: Are you concerned that greyhounds are being used in medical research?

Ms PRU GOWARD: I would need to get more information for you, so I can take that on notice.

The Hon. LYNDA VOLTZ: You said in the debate on greyhound racing, "For this Government to do this is evidence of the seriousness of the animal welfare issues".

Ms PRU GOWARD: Yes.

The Hon. LYNDA VOLTZ: Why is greyhound racing a serious animal welfare issue and the use of greyhounds in medical research not?

Ms PRU GOWARD: I was referring to greyhound racing, and I would like to take your question on notice.

The Hon. LYNDA VOLTZ: Do you think greyhounds are not being put through cruel treatment in medical research?

The Hon. SARAH MITCHELL: Point of order: The Minister has already said—

Ms PRU GOWARD: It is a serious question that has been asked and it deserves a serious answer. I think we need to look at it.

ANSWER:

I am advised:

This matter should be referred to the Hon Niall Blair MLC, Minister for Primary Industries and Minister for Lands and Water.

The husbandry, monitoring, breeding and use in research of animals in NSW must comply with all relevant legislation, including the *NSW Animal Research Act 1985*, *NSW Animal Research Regulation 2010* and the Australian Code for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes 2013.

Animals in medical research

Transcript p12

The Hon. LYNDIA VOLTZ: Minister, you have had ministerial responsibility for medical research for at least two years. Why has the issue of greyhounds and their treatment under medical research never been brought to your attention?

Ms PRU GOWARD: I have been the Minister since April 2015. I am very happy to take that question on notice. I understand that our research is always conducted humanely. I might ask Dr Chant to give you some further information.

Dr CHANT: As I have said, animal testing is overseen and monitored by the New South Wales Department of Primary Industries. I am happy to personally follow up the use of greyhounds in research. That is probably all I can say at this point. Having said that, if any ethics committee has approved it, it would have gone through the processes as described. I am happy to take up the issues raised by the Hon. Mark Pearson as previously indicated.

The Hon. LYNDIA VOLTZ: So no qualms have been raised with you about the use of greyhounds in medical research?

Dr CHANT: I have had no personal representations. I would have to check correspondence to my office, because some of that correspondence would go to the Director of the Office for Health and Medical Research. None has been brought directly to my attention, or I have not had conversations where that issue has been directly raised with me. That is not to say that no-one has not raised that with the department. Again, we would be happy to look into this issue.

The Hon. LYNDIA VOLTZ: Could you also provide the number of greyhounds that have been used for medical research?

Dr CHANT: As I said, that data may be held by the Department of Primary Industries, so we will work on the appropriate responsible agency to respond.

ANSWER:

This matter falls within the portfolio of the Hon Niall Blair MLC, Minister for Primary Industries and Minister for Lands and Water and this includes responsibility for monitoring figures for animals that have been utilised for the purposes of medical research.

The husbandry, monitoring, breeding and use in research of animals in NSW must comply with all relevant legislation, including the *NSW Animal Research Act 1985*, *NSW Animal Research Regulation 2010* and the Australian Code for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes 2013.

Dosing errors – Cumberland and Macquarie Hospitals

Transcript p12 - 13

The Hon. LYNDIA VOLTZ: When you get your reports on known incidents, have you received through the incident management system a report on Macquarie and Cumberland hospitals?

Ms PRU GOWARD: I have certainly been to Cumberland Hospital and looked at facilities there. Of course, the Cumberland site is a very old site. What is your specific question?

The Hon. LYNDIA VOLTZ: I asked you a specific question: whether you were aware of the incident management system and whether your office received reports. You said you do receive reports. What is the nature of those reports?

Ms PRU GOWARD: Reports come in and out of my office all the time. You need to be more specific.

The Hon. LYNDIA VOLTZ: Just give me an example of one you can recall.

Ms PRU GOWARD: I do not think that is appropriate. I am not going to make up or half-recall—

The Hon. LYNDIA VOLTZ: I am not asking you to make it up. You just said that you receive reports under the incident management system. I am asking you the nature of those reports.

Ms PRU GOWARD: I will take that on notice. I do not want to mislead the committee about any information I provide.

ANSWER:

Various reports about various matters come into my office all the time.

I am advised that Medication dosing errors are reported through the IIMS incident reporting system and managed through the established local and state clinical governance systems and structures.

State aggregated IIMS data is available on the Clinical Excellence Commission website at:
<http://www.cec.health.nsw.gov.au/clinical-incident-management>

Dosing errors – Cumberland and Macquarie Hospitals

Transcript p 13

The Hon. LYNDIA VOLTZ: When is Cumberland due to close?

Ms COX: Cumberland is not closing.

The Hon. LYNDIA VOLTZ: It is not closing; it is going to stay open? How many senior management positions are currently filled as acting in Western Sydney Local Health District?

Ms KOFF: We do not know the operational details of management positions currently vacant. We will take that on notice.

ANSWER:

The Western Sydney Local Health District is recruiting for four permanent positions within the executive of the mental health service.

Poppy Bill – regulation to legalise the growing of poppies in NSW

Transcript p 17

Reverend the Hon. FRED NILE: Thank you. A similar situation is now occurring with a bill we have just passed through the Parliament nicknamed the poppy bill to legalise the growing of poppies in New South Wales to be used as opiates to relieve people's pain. Have you had the opportunity yet to work out some similar scientific supervision of that area?

Ms PRU GOWARD: I appreciate the growing of it in Tasmania is very closely supervised. Kerry Chant would be the best person to answer.

Dr CHANT: Whilst we would not be the approval body, I am aware that in selection of sites security of access is key. There is also a very tight regulatory structure put around the misuse of the poppies. But clearly having an opioid supply for pharmaceutical products is essential.

Reverend the Hon. FRED NILE: So the department does have a monitoring role?

Dr CHANT: It would be other regulators, but the department would obviously be consulted on some aspects of it. Regulation for safety and security would not primarily sit with the ministry, as far as I am aware. I would be happy to look at the exact nature of the regulatory process and take that on notice.

Reverend the Hon. FRED NILE: Thank you.

ANSWER:

Regulation to legalise the growing of poppies falls within the portfolio of the Hon Niall Blair MLC, Minister for Primary Industries and Minister for Lands and Water.

Safe Schools Program

Transcript p 17

The Hon. MARK PEARSON: One of the main principles of the Safe Schools program is an inclusiveness of children who are facing sexual identity issues rather than an exclusiveness. Is that incorporated into this program that you are talking about at the moment?

Ms PRU GOWARD: I am happy to look at it and get some further advice for you.

ANSWER:

I am advised:

Matters concerning the Safe Schools program should be referred to the Hon Adrian Piccoli MP, Minister for Education.

Women's Refuges - Beds

Transcript p 19 - 20

The Hon. LYNDIA VOLTZ: Minister, I will take you back to what you said last year. You have just answered a question from my colleague that you are responsible for mapping the services for domestic violence, you have an overview of it and you meet regularly with your Ministers. I assume as the Minister you will take some interest as to how many beds are available?

Ms PRU GOWARD: Yes, but the question needs to be—

The Hon. LYNDIA VOLTZ: The GIPA request was sent to your department, not to Minister Hazzard's. As the Minister responsible for mapping it, I would assume you would want to know how many there were.

Ms PRU GOWARD: Traditionally, this is the responsibility of Minister Hazzard as the Minister for Family and Community Services.

The Hon. LYNDIA VOLTZ: When I asked Minister Hazzard, he gave me an answer. As the Minister responsible for domestic violence and sexual assault, with a whole-of-government strategy and who meets regularly with Ministers to ensure that the plan for the New South Wales domestic and family violence blueprint is delivered, as you stated last year, I want to know was the first time you were aware of how many beds were available for women leaving domestic violence was somewhere between June 2016 and August 2016?

Ms PRU GOWARD: I think you should be delighted that pre the reforms we had 63 government-owned crisis properties as women's refuges and we now have 65.

The Hon. LYNDIA VOLTZ: But you would not know that because you did not know until after June 2016 what the figures were of how many rooms and beds were available. Do you know how many beds and rooms were available under that 63?

Ms PRU GOWARD: And we now have—

The Hon. LYNDIA VOLTZ: How many beds were available under that 63?

The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN: Point of order: The Minister is trying to answer the question.

The ACTING CHAIR: Order! I uphold the point of order.

The Hon. LYNDIA VOLTZ: The Minister is not answering the question.

The Hon. SARAH MITCHELL: She cannot get a word in.

The ACTING CHAIR: The Hon. Lynda Voltz will come to order. When asking questions, please allow the Minister an opportunity to answer. The Minister has been asked a question and she should be given an opportunity to answer it.

The Hon. LYNDIA VOLTZ: How many beds were there under the 63 refuges and how many beds are there now?

Ms PRU GOWARD: I will have to refer that matter to the Department of Family and Community Services because they are the responsible authority—and you have your answer.

ANSWER:

This question should be referred to the Hon Brad Hazzard MP, Minister for Family and Community Services.

Women's Refuges - Goulburn

Transcript p 22

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: Minister, we have limited time. I have another question. In your electorate of Goulburn, one refuge that with originally seven beds has been replaced with a refuge that has only five beds. I am interested to know whether this has been replicated around the State or whether it is purely something that has occurred in your own electorate?

Ms PRU GOWARD: I would have to take that on notice.

ANSWER:

I am advised:

The Department of Family and Community Services funds Anglicare for the Goulburn Homelessness Support Service to assist clients accessing homelessness service including those affected by domestic and family violence. For more information about this funding and other support, this question should be referred to the Minister for Family and Community Services and Minister for Social Housing, the Hon Brad Hazzard MP who administers specialist homeless services.

Women's Refuges - Goulburn

Transcript p 22

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: Minister, are you aware of a woman who was left for eight hours at the Goulburn police station because of the reduced number of beds?

Ms PRU GOWARD: I am aware there was a claim to that effect.

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: You are aware that a woman in Goulburn was forced to wait eight hours in a police station because of the reduction in beds?

Ms PRU GOWARD: I am aware that that was claimed and I would need to take that on notice.

ANSWER:

I am advised:

The Department of Family and Community Services funds Anglicare for the Goulburn Homelessness Support Service to assist clients accessing homelessness service including those affected by domestic and family violence. For more information about this funding and other support, this question should be referred to the Minister for Family and Community Services and Minister for Social Housing, the Hon Brad Hazzard MP who administers specialist homeless services.

Tweed Valley Women's Service - On Track Community Programs

Transcript p 23

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: Minister, do you know Ms Elaine De Vos?

Ms PRU GOWARD: Could you give me more information?

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: Ms Elaine De Vos is the chief executive officer of On Track Community Programs?

Ms PRU GOWARD: I cannot recall.

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: You do not recall?

Ms PRU GOWARD: I meet a lot of people.

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: Ms De Vos is the chief executive officer of On Track Community Programs on the far North Coast of New South Wales.

Ms PRU GOWARD: Right.

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: She professes she has a close personal relationship with you.

Ms PRU GOWARD: Would you like to get to the point of your question?

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: I am asking if have you a personal relationship with Ms De Vos.

Ms PRU GOWARD: I would like to ask what your question is. I do not quite see the point of all this. I have personal relationships with all sorts of people.

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: I will get to the point of the question in a moment. My question is, Do you have a personal relationship with Ms De Vos?

Ms PRU GOWARD: What do you mean by personal relationship?

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: Do you know this person well?

Ms PRU GOWARD: Is that what you mean by personal relationship?

The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN: Point of order: This is a budget estimates inquiry. I cannot see how a personal relationship or otherwise the Minister might have with a random individual is relevant to the budget estimates process.

The ACTING CHAIR: I uphold the point of order. Does the member have a question in relation to this organisation?

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: Ms De Vos runs an organisation called On Track Community Programs on the far North Coast of New South Wales. They recently cancelled a contract with Tweed Valley Women's Service. Are you aware of this?

Ms PRU GOWARD: I would have to take that on notice.

ANSWER:

I am advised:

This matter should be referred to the Hon Brad Hazzard MP, Minister for Family and Community Services.

Women's AFC Asian Cup

Transcript p 23

The Hon. LYNDA VOLTZ: Given that the New South Wales Government through Events New South Wales funded the men's AFC Asian Cup, why did they not back the women's AFC Asian Cup?

Ms PRU GOWARD: That is a question you should address to the Minister for Sport.

The Hon. LYNDA VOLTZ: As the Minister for Women, are you concerned that there is an inequality between men's sporting events and women's sporting events?

Ms PRU GOWARD: I certainly recognise the important role that sport plays in the lives of men and women.

The Hon. LYNDA VOLTZ: Do you think that there is an important principle that the Government should be treating women's sport with the same gravitas that it supports men's sport?

Ms PRU GOWARD: We absolutely support the role of women in sport. I will take the details of your question on notice.

ANSWER:

Gender should not be a limiting factor for participation in sport, just as it should not be a barrier to education or career progression.

Sport can help break down barriers and challenge gender norms, not only on the field of play, but also in the workplace, at home, in schools and in other aspects of society.

Requests for information on NSW Government investment in sport should be directed to the Minister for Sport, the Hon Stuart Ayres MP.

Tweed Valley Women's Service - On Track Community Programs

Transcript p 23 - 24

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: Coming back to the question about Tweed Valley Women's Service, their contract was cancelled in December—just before Christmas late last year. There has been quite a community campaign calling for the reinstatement of this service. My specific question for you is about smaller services contracting to larger lead agencies. Are you familiar with the general processes of what has occurred?

I am happy to provide you with more information to assist you.

Ms PRU GOWARD: I think that would be great. Why do you not provide me with more information? I am happy to look at it.

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: The contract was cancelled from On Track Community Programs. One of the criteria that was provided to support a cancellation was because the local gag rule had been breached by the Tweed Valley women's community service.

Ms PRU GOWARD: I will take that on notice.

ANSWER:

I am advised:

This matter should be referred to the Hon Brad Hazzard MP, Minister for Family and Community Services.

Provocation Law

Transcript p 25 - 26

Reverend the Hon. FRED NILE: Minister, has there been a review regarding the impact of my new provocation law to protect vulnerable women and spouses from domestic violence?

Ms PRU GOWARD: I will have to take that on notice, Reverend Nile. I am not aware of that.

Reverend the Hon. FRED NILE: You are aware of the new rule.

Ms PRU GOWARD: Yes. I am wondering whether Elizabeth Koff has any material to add.

Ms KOFF: I will take it on notice.

Reverend the Hon. FRED NILE: There has been no evaluation?

Ms PRU GOWARD: Of the impact that it is having?

Reverend the Hon. FRED NILE: Yes.

Ms PRU GOWARD: No.

Reverend the Hon. FRED NILE: You will take that on notice, then.

Ms PRU GOWARD: The Attorney General might have some material for you. I will certainly make sure that she is advised of your interest in it.

Reverend the Hon. FRED NILE: I was thinking more in the area of women's activities. It is an issue that should have produced some results.

Ms PRU GOWARD: It should have by now. You are quite right, Reverend the Hon. Fred Nile. I will get some material for you.

ANSWER:

I am advised:

This matter should be referred to the Hon Gabrielle Upton MP, Attorney General.

Womensport

Transcript p 31

The Hon. LYNDIA VOLTZ: Have you ever met with Womensport?

Ms PRU GOWARD: I certainly did in opposition. I recall, but I am not sure, meeting them in the early days of the Government when Graham Annesley was the Minister. I will certainly take that on notice and check the record.

ANSWER:

I meet with stakeholders on a range of issues.

Details of meetings by Government Ministers is available on the Department of Premier and Cabinet Website at:

http://www.dpc.nsw.gov.au/about/publications/ministers_diary_disclosures

Flexible Work Practices

Transcript p 31

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: There was a specific announcement on International Women's Day around flexible work for the public service, and I was interested in whether you were involved in that process.

Ms PRU GOWARD: As part of the response to this complex issue, as you say, the Premier announced 100 per cent flexibility. Of course I talk to the Premier all the time about women's issues, or many of them, I should say.

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: Did you talk to him specifically about this question of flexible working?

Ms PRU GOWARD: I would need to give you the detail of that which, I suspect, is your next question, so I would like to take it on notice.

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: Can you also tell me what numbers of staff within any of the departments that you supervise or coordinate currently have flexible working arrangements?

Ms PRU GOWARD: I will ask the ministry.

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The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: Are there any people in your ministerial office who work flexibly?

Ms PRU GOWARD: Yes.

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: Would you be able to provide the proportion of those on notice?

Ms PRU GOWARD: Okay.

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The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: Are you able to take on notice how many people in the department have flexible working arrangements? Do you have a register of flexible working arrangements?

Ms KOFF: I am not sure whether we have a register of flexible working arrangements but, if we do, I will be happy to take it on notice.

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: If you could also tell me how many people are registered and what types of flexible working is involved in that, that would be great.

Ms KOFF: Yes, certainly.

Ms DE SILVA: I can also say that Women NSW recognises the importance of people having the ability to work flexibly. Within our office there is availability for people to work flexibly. While there is not a register, it is common practice and it is supported.

The Hon. LYNDIA VOLTZ: Figures show that 41 per cent of women work flexibly. Would it be 41 per cent in your own department?

Ms DE SILVA: In Women NSW?

The Hon. LYNDIA VOLTZ: Yes.

Ms DE SILVA: Easily, I would think.

The Hon. LYNDIA VOLTZ: If you could provide us with the figures, that would be good. If we could get all of the figures, that would be great too.

Ms DE SILVA: Certainly. I would also say that it would change depending upon people's needs at different times. It is not necessarily always consistent with an individual taking up flexible work opportunities, but it does vary according to the needs.

ANSWER:

I am advised:

The conditions of employment for Ministerial Office staff are determined by the Premier and managed by the individual Ministers' Office.

Currently, there are 75 staff in the NSW Ministry of Health that have flexible work arrangements. Opportunities for such arrangements were promoted in an HR information sheet in June 2016.

All employees, including those in the Ministerial Office, have the opportunity to request agreement on flexible working arrangements, including, but not limited to, working from home, commencing early or working late and working part-time. These arrangements vary depending on individual employee needs at different times.

Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners

Transcript p 33

Ms PRU GOWARD: It will make a big difference. It enhances the statewide workforce of doctors who provide medical and forensic responses to all victims of sexual assault. It will be available to adults and young people over 14 years of age who have experienced sexual assault. The member should note that it is not yet provided in paediatrics cases due to the complexity of that area. To address this service gap, a child abuse sexual assault clinical advice line will go live in September. The line will support, guide and build the capacity of medical staff and sexual assault nurse examiners across New South Wales to deliver high-quality, timely and accessible medical and forensic examinations for victims of child sexual assault and child abuse.

In addition to the increase in the number of sexual assault nurse examiners in New South Wales, the Government has also provided funding for a number of other vital initiatives, including 55 sexual assault services across New South Wales that provide face-to-face crisis counselling, medical and forensic services, assistance with reporting to police and preparing for court, annual supplementation funding, \$220,000 towards contracting visiting medical officers to undertake examinations to improve sexual assault medical and forensic services for victims in rural and remote New South Wales, and New Street Services providing early intervention and prevention programs—

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: Minister, I am sorry to cut you off because this is an excellent program, but I have only 45 seconds left in which to ask questions. To what towns or regions have these nurses been provided?

Ms KOFF: Newcastle, Bourke, Bathurst, Taree, Broken Hill, and Gosford.

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: Can you provide on notice how many nurses have been allocated to each location?

Ms KOFF: Yes.

ANSWER:

As at 7 September 2016, Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners working / providing services in NSW are located in the following Local Health Districts:

Local Health District	Working	In training
Northern Sydney Local Health District	3	3
Western Sydney Local Health District	5	
Hunter New England Local Health District	4	1
Central Coast Local Health District	1	
Western NSW Local Health District	4	3
Far West Local Health District	1	2
TOTAL	18	9

One Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner works and provides services in two local health districts.

Sexual Assault

Transcript p 33 - 34

Reverend the Hon. FRED NILE: On Saturday the *Daily Telegraph* reported on a 14-year-old girl who had been raped by her carers—who were supposed to protect her—and who eventually committed suicide. As the Minister for Women, have you had any interest in this case and can you provide further information, particularly about the person who committed the rape and who was working as a carer? Did he have a certificate to work with children, and what has been put in place to prevent such things occurring in the future?

Ms PRU GOWARD: That girl's life was tragic. She deserved much better than she received from all concerned. The death of a young person is always a tragedy, and I am very saddened by this case and the circumstances of her life. I have discussed this tragedy with Minister Hazzard because it is his responsibility. I am advised that the Minister was concerned about historic information regarding serious allegations of sexual assaults by staff at the facility housing this girl. Accordingly, he contacted the royal commission and asked that it expand its investigations to include these matters. I absolutely support the actions the Minister has taken. I am also advised that he has written to the Director of Public Prosecutions requesting a review of the case against the alleged offender and that consideration be given to reopening the case of Girl X, as she is known. However, given that the matter is the subject of a coronial inquiry and suppression orders, it would be inappropriate for me to comment any further.

Reverend the Hon. FRED NILE: Who issued the suppression order that has restricted information being made available in this case? It is effectively a gag order.

Ms PRU GOWARD: The suppression order would have been issued by the court, but it would have done so in response to a request.

Reverend the Hon. FRED NILE: You are not sure who requested it?

Ms PRU GOWARD: No, I am sorry, I am not.

Reverend the Hon. FRED NILE: Was it anyone involved with the Health portfolio?

Ms PRU GOWARD: Not that I understand. However, I will take the question on notice.

ANSWER:

I am advised:

This question should be referred to the Hon Brad Hazzard MP, Minister for Family and Community Services.

Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme

Transcript p 34 - 35

Ms DE SILVA: The DVDS is co-led by the Ministry of Health through our office, the Department of Justice, and the NSW Police Force. The statistics that the police have provided in relation to applications indicate that there have been 19 requests and 12 disclosures have been supplied from the commencement of the scheme in April until 11 July this year.

Dr MEHREEN FARUQI: What is the budget for the program?

Ms PRU GOWARD: It is \$2.3 million. That is because we are investing with a non-government organisation.

Dr MEHREEN FARUQI: I understand that the program envisaged that non-government organisations would be providing specialist domestic and family violence support for people accessing DVDS orders. Specifically I am interested in the support to high risk communities including culturally and linguistically diverse communities; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer [LGBTIQ] people; and people with disability. I think these services were going to be tendered out. Has that process been completed and have the services been tendered out?

Ms PRU GOWARD: Yes. I will ask Natasha de Silva to answer.

Ms DE SILVA: Thank you. That is right. There was an open tender process that was undertaken to engage specialist domestic and family violence [DFV] support services to work with the police in those local areas. Your point about addressing particular groups that may be at risk is well taken and well made. In the process of selection of those specific sites, those issues were considered. In determining which pilot sites would be selected, it was sought to have a mix between metropolitan and regional areas. Also these areas that were chosen have a medium to high volume of DFV reports or matters, culturally diverse populations and an effective NGO service. Some of the materials that we provided for the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme [DVDS] to alert people to the service are currently being translated into five other languages.

Dr MEHREEN FARUQI: Would it be possible to get a list of the organisations that won the tenders?

Ms DE SILVA: Yes—absolutely.

Dr MEHREEN FARUQI: If you could take that on notice, that would be great.

Ms DE SILVA: I am happy to.

ANSWER:

The following organisations won tenders:

- Sutherland Shire Family Services (Sutherland and St George LACS)
- Tamworth Family Support Service (Oxley LAC)
- YWCA NSW (Shoalhaven LAC)