

**Select Committee on the Provisions of the Public Health Amendment
(Registered Nurses in Nursing Homes) Bill 2020**

Hearing – 22 February 2021

Follow up to answers to questions on notice

QUESTION 1

In follow up to Question 2: On the 4th bullet point, you state that NBMLHD established a combined response team for COVID-19 positive patients.

- a. Who were the members of this response team?
- b. When was the first meeting held?
- c. How often did it meet?
- d. What were the dates of those meetings?
- e. When did it conclude meeting?

ANSWER

The Nepean Blue Mountains Local Health District (NBMLHD) formed a combined response team for managing COVID-19 positive patients in residential aged care facilities (RACFs). This multi-disciplinary team comprised of staff members from the Virtual Aged Care Services (Geriatrics), Hospital in the Home, Intensive Care Unit, Respiratory Medicine and Palliative Care services.

The primary role of the response team was to provide clinical care and support to COVID-19 positive residents at Newmarch House. On 12 April 2020, members of the response team attended Newmarch House. On 13 April 2020, the first resident at Newmarch House was admitted into the Hospital in the Home Program. The response team provided ongoing clinical care over the course of the outbreak, including daily assessments by telehealth. The outbreak response was closed on 15 June 2020.

QUESTION 2

On the 6th bullet point, you say “By 14 April 2020, all 100 residents of Newmarch House were tested for COVID-19, or were in the process of being tested...” When was this first testing completed?

ANSWER

The first round of testing was completed by 17 April 2020, except for a small number of residents who did not consent to being tested, as well as a number of residents with dementia who could not consent to being tested.

QUESTION 3

In follow up to Question 12:

- a. When was the surge workforce recruited?
- b. How were the staff recruited?
- c. How long will the surge workforce remain in place?

ANSWER

Between April and August 2020, surge workforce was sourced from several NSW Health talent pools, including:

- existing HealthShare NSW talent pools;
- a Randstadt managed Expression of Interest (EOI) process that included non-health workforce and health professionals; and
- a HealthShare NSW managed EOI process for general recruitment to a talent pool of applicants willing to work in health services during a pandemic (largely not health professional).

In September 2020, action was commenced to establish a Care Assistant surge workforce. Interviews began on 13 October 2020, and final numbers were in place by 15 December 2020. Those selected at interview progressed to the Health Education and Training Institute's five day essential upskilling online training. Once completed, Care Assistants were tabled as recruited and able to be deployed into RACFs or Acute facilities.

The Care Assistant surge workforce is not on retainer. They remain on HealthShare NSW managed casual pools for deployment as needed across the NSW Health system. As of February 2021, 63 per cent of the surge workforce were employed with HealthShare NSW as Hospital Assistants (an existing role in health services). However, 37 per cent are trained but are not working within the NSW Health System.

QUESTION 4

In follow up to Question 13:

- a. Who are the members of the Senior Inter-governmental Oversight Group?
- b. When was it established?
- c. When was the Outbreak Management Team established?

ANSWER

- a. Dr Nigel Lyons, Deputy Secretary, Health System Strategy and Planning
Michael Lye, Deputy Secretary, Ageing and Aged Care, Commonwealth Department of Health
Janet Anderson, Aged Care Quality and Safety Commissioner
Kay Hyman, Chief Executive, Nepean Blue Mountains Local Health District
- b. 17 April 2020.
- c. 16 April 2020.

QUESTION 5

In follow up to Question 14:

- a. How many complaints have been received in
 - i. 2019-20
 - ii. 2018-19
 - iii. 2017-18?
- b. How many FTE are currently employed as NSW Ministry of Health regulators?

c. Do they all conduct inspections as part of that role?

ANSWER

NSW Health acts on all complaints it receives about breaches of the *Public Health Act 2010* (NSW) provisions.

The NSW Ministry of Health received two complaints in 2017-18 about potential breaches of the *Public Health Act 2010* (NSW).

These complaints were appropriately investigated by the Ministry of Health regulators.

The Ministry of Health did not receive any complaints of breaches of the *Public Health Act 2010* (NSW) in the periods 2018-19 or 2019-20.

Ministry of Health regulators have a role in conducting inspections and are also responsible for regulation of private health facilities. The Ministry of Health currently has four FTE regulators, all of whom conduct inspections in response to complaints as required.

QUESTION 6

How many inspections were undertaken by the Ministry of Health regulators of RACF in

- a. 2019-20
- b. 2018-19
- c. 2017-18?

ANSWER

The Ministry of Health has not conducted any inspections of RACFs relating to investigations of potential breaches of the *Public Health Act 2010* (NSW).

QUESTION 7

In follow up to Question 16: Can you please provide a list of the dates, and which facilities accessed the National Medical Stockpile?

ANSWER

Date	Name
4/02/2020	Dorothy Henderson Lodge
20/04/2020	Newmarch House
26/04/2020	Newmarch House
27/04/2020	Lark Ellen Aged Care
3/05/2020	Newmarch House
15/05/2020	Newmarch House
22/05/2020	Newmarch House
25/05/2020	Newmarch House
16/07/2020	Commonwealth RACF (un-specified)
19/12/2020	Japara Bayview Gardens
20/12/2020	Japara Bayview Gardens
30/12/2020	Japara Bayview Gardens