

**Ms CATE FAEHRMANN:** Getting to Dubbo and Bathurst then, it is good to know that that can be effective for a start, but then they come back. So they need the support in Walgett. You said there is one woman who has started just recently and is specifically trained in this—

**Ms KENNEDY WILLIAMS:** Yes,

**Ms CATE FAEHRMANN:** —but she is unfortunately not sticking around.

**Ms KENNEDY WILLIAMS:** No.

**Ms CATE FAEHRMANN:** Do you think that is just because it is too hard, the overall support?

**Ms KENNEDY WILLIAMS:** No, it is not hard for her. It is because she wants to move closer to her family. She is fantastic. She is Indigenous and knows the community. But we are losing her so we have got no-one after she goes. And it is a big population of drug and alcohol now.

**Ms CATE FAEHRMANN:** Yes. The AMS obviously recognises that need. Will there be a vacancy that is a funded position that will need to be refilled? Is that your understanding? Do you know?

**Ms KENNEDY WILLIAMS:** I think they will. I think they will try and sell it but it is just trying to get the staff out this way.

**Ms CATE FAEHRMANN:** In terms of beds and other things, having the counselling—the staff is one thing, so it is great that there has been this woman in that position for a little bit, but if they need treatment in terms of getting into a rehab bed, there is nothing. Is that right in Walgett, it is just the worker that they see and then for any other service they need to go elsewhere?

**Ms KENNEDY WILLIAMS:** It is the registered worker they see and then they go.

**Ms CATE FAEHRMANN:** And they come back with that, okay. The mental health worker who you mentioned in response to a question by the Hon. Walt Secord, you said that they had relocated them. Was that a conscious decision to get rid of the position of a mental health worker in Walgett and move them somewhere else?

**Ms KENNEDY WILLIAMS:** I will have to find that out. All of a sudden they were there and the next minute they were gone. We did have a drug and alcohol worker for a while at the hospital, and they have gone too.

**Ms CATE FAEHRMANN:** Over the past, say, 10 years or so, do you think the situation is getting worse in Walgett in terms of the health services? It has probably always been pretty shocking. I was trying to think of a word without swearing—pretty shocking.

**Ms KENNEDY WILLIAMS:** It is getting worse. I found out the other day that we have got no nursing staff for February so the hospital will have to shut down.

**Ms CATE FAEHRMANN:** What?

**Ms KENNEDY WILLIAMS:** Yes. That is how bad it is, because we cannot get any staffing in to cover these shifts.

**Ms CATE FAEHRMANN:** Hang on, wait. So shutting down, what are you saying?

**Ms KENNEDY WILLIAMS:** The services here. There are not enough staff to cover shifts.

**Ms CATE FAEHRMANN:** So you shut down the—

**Ms KENNEDY WILLIAMS:** We shut the beds down and they have to relocate. We send them on to Dubbo or wherever.

**Ms CATE FAEHRMANN:** Have you shut down before for a month?

**Ms KENNEDY WILLIAMS:** We have shut beds because of the staffing here.

**Ms CATE FAEHRMANN:** When you say "shut down in February", do you mean shut down all the beds?

**Ms KENNEDY WILLIAMS:** No. Just partly, not all the beds.


**Ms CATE FAEHRMANN:** When you have shut down before, does that mean that people who need critical health support and services have to—from experience, have you seen bad outcomes as a result of that, as in people not being able to get the medical services that they need at the time?

# Summary of Comments on Transcript+ - + RRR+ Health + inquiry+ - + 2+ December+ 2021+ - + UNCORRECTED+ + (4) all good.pdf

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 Number: 1 Author: ARode Subject: Highlight Date: 8/12/2021 5:15:00 PM


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 Author: 28015926 Subject: Sticky Note Date: 9/02/2022 1:43:13 PM

The Walgett Health service had Mental Health Worker position which was relocated at Lightning Ridge Health Service. The full time position was regularly coming in to Walgett Health Service but the service is no longer available on a regular and the ability to contact the mental health worker in work hours and out of work hours is very difficult. Mental health presentation has increased due to drugs and alcohol.

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 Author: 28015926 Subject: Sticky Note Date: 9/02/2022 1:43:33 PM

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 Number: 2 Author: 28015926 Subject: Sticky Note Date: 17/02/2022 3:55:47 PM

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The Walgett Health service had Mental Health Worker position which was relocated at Lightning Ridge Health Service. The full time position was regularly coming in to Walgett Health Service but the service is no longer available on a regular and the ability to contact the mental health worker in work hours and out of work hours is very difficult. Mental health presentation has increased due to drugs and alcohol.

**Ms KENNEDY WILLIAMS:** They will get the service for a short time and then they will have to go out to Dubbo. Once they are in Dubbo they have got to find their own way back home. That is another issue.

**Ms CATE FAEHRMANN:** That is another big issue, isn't it, the transport? We have heard that issue a lot. Did you want to tell the Committee what that is?

**Ms KENNEDY WILLIAMS:** That means when they get to Dubbo, they have been transported out of here by air ambulance or by road transport. Once they get to Dubbo they are put out of the hospital once they get well and then they find their own way back to Walgett. So most people object to going there; they will sign themselves out.

**The Hon. EMMA HURST:** I will move to Government questions.

**The Hon. TREVOR KHAN:** Can I get some context in terms of Walgett? I am interested in the issue of training on country and whether that is feasible. Am I right that Walgett has about 2,500 people in it?

**Ms KENNEDY WILLIAMS:** Yes.

**The Hon. TREVOR KHAN:** I am not asking for precise numbers but that is, as I recall it, the sort of size of the town.

**Ms KENNEDY WILLIAMS:** Yes.

**The Hon. TREVOR KHAN:** In terms of Walgett shire, that is 6,000 or 7,000 people?

**Ms KENNEDY WILLIAMS:** Yes, because most of the region probably comes into it.

**The Hon. TREVOR KHAN:** You, like me, have been around for a while.

**Ms KENNEDY WILLIAMS:** Yes.

**The Hon. TREVOR KHAN:** What has the population of Walgett been like since, say, the 1980s? Has it gone up, gone down or stagnated? What has the position been?

**Ms KENNEDY WILLIAMS:** I reckon it has gone down a bit. Most people go away but they come back. When they get sick they come back to Walgett.

**The Hon. TREVOR KHAN:** Do I take it that, in a sense, what you have is a young population and an old population and the middle is hollowed out a bit?

**Ms KENNEDY WILLIAMS:** Yes.

**The Hon. TREVOR KHAN:** To that extent, you have problems with chronic disease in the elderly. Would that be right?

**Ms KENNEDY WILLIAMS:** Yes, we have.

**The Hon. TREVOR KHAN:** And you have the paediatric issues, both in terms of births and problems with childhood illnesses and the like. Is that what you are confronting in terms of your work?

**Ms KENNEDY WILLIAMS:** Yes, that and palliative care.

**The Hon. TREVOR KHAN:** Yes. We have not really talked much about palliative care with you.

**Ms KENNEDY WILLIAMS:** Sorry.

**The Hon. TREVOR KHAN:** No, that is not your fault. We just have not got there yet. Let me go to the training exercise. Tell me something about the size of the TAFE that you have got there.

**Ms KENNEDY WILLIAMS:** It is fairly big, the TAFE. I do not know how many staff they have on board.


**The Hon. TREVOR KHAN:** What trades and the like and what courses are taught there? 2

**Ms KENNEDY WILLIAMS:** I do not know but I will get back to you 3 Not nursing. I know 4 is not nursing.


**The Hon. TREVOR KHAN:** When you talk about training on country and it being done at the TAFE, are you talking about courses for registered nurses or enrolled nurses [ENs]?

**Ms KENNEDY WILLIAMS:** Let's say if you do training from an assistant in nursing, maybe start doing the AIN and then into an EN and maybe an RN. Maybe they all go right for the RN. But get them involved in the first bit, the first enrolment, to get them up to that level.

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 Number: 1      Author: ARode      Subject: Highlight      Date: 8/12/2021 5:17:38 PM

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 Author: 28015926      Subject: Sticky Note      Date: 17/02/2022 3:47:56 PM


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There is no nursing course at our local TAFE.

The only courses that the TAFE do is first aide and Aged Care funding tool that relevant to our hospital.

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 Number: 2      Author: 28015926      Subject: Sticky Note      Date: 17/02/2022 3:51:29 PM


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There is no nursing course at our local TAFE.

The only courses that the TAFE do is first aide and Aged Care funding tool that relevant to our hospital.

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**The Hon. TREVOR KHAN:** I am not being critical but my guesstimate was that you were not going to be able to train RNs there simply because of the skill levels that are involved.

**Ms KENNEDY WILLIAMS:** No, you have got to go over to [inaudible]. But if they do the AIN then the EN, they would be able to do it.

**The Hon. TREVOR KHAN:** That would be feasible.

**Ms KENNEDY WILLIAMS:** Yes.

**The Hon. TREVOR KHAN:** I will break it down into its component parts. In terms of your place of work, the MPS, how many RNs are employed there?

**Ms KENNEDY WILLIAMS:** I do not know. I will have to get back to you because it changes. We have got new ones who are just starting.

**The Hon. TREVOR KHAN:** And ENs, do you have any idea on that front? It is alright, you can get back to us. That is fine.

**Ms KENNEDY WILLIAMS:** I will get back to you. Sorry about that.

**The Hon. TREVOR KHAN:** To be honest, I am interested in the MPS model, having seen it in other areas. I do not think I ever visited it in Walgett. Essentially, do I take it that you have an ambulance facility, the hospital facility and an aged-care facility all rolled into one? Is that what you have there?

**Ms KENNEDY WILLIAMS:** And also we have got a renal dialysis unit.

**The Hon. TREVOR KHAN:** I was going to ask that. How many chairs have you got?

**Ms KENNEDY WILLIAMS:** We have got four chairs. It is run six days a week and there are seven times.

**The Hon. TREVOR KHAN:** Is it one of the RNs who essentially supervises the dialysis chairs?

**Ms KENNEDY WILLIAMS:** Yes, and that one is via Dubbo.

**The Hon. TREVOR KHAN:** Samples and the like all go back to Dubbo.

**Ms KENNEDY WILLIAMS:** Yes.

**The Hon. TREVOR KHAN:** You are essentially a spoke out of Dubbo. That is right, is it not?

**Ms KENNEDY WILLIAMS:** Yes, that is it.

**The Hon. TREVOR KHAN:** So if somebody has got severe renal failure, they will be shipped off, one way or the other, to Dubbo.

**Ms KENNEDY WILLIAMS:** Yes, by ambulance.

**The Hon. TREVOR KHAN:** Do I take it that even though I think by distance you are closer to, for instance, Narrabri, there is really no communication along that line?

**Ms KENNEDY WILLIAMS:** No, only Dubbo.

**The Hon. TREVOR KHAN:** Similarly, Moree is not a line of essential communication or provision of services?

**Ms KENNEDY WILLIAMS:** No, that is outside our boundary.

**The Hon. TREVOR KHAN:** If we then go back to the issue of training, if you are going to get nurses into your MPS, the likely route is through Dubbo—training in Dubbo and then out to Walgett. Would that be right?

**Ms KENNEDY WILLIAMS:** Yes.


**The Hon. TREVOR KHAN:** Are your RNs First Nations?

**Ms KENNEDY WILLIAMS:** No.

**The Hon. TREVOR KHAN:** Any? None?

**Ms KENNEDY WILLIAMS:** None. There is only me.

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 Number: 2 Author: VOloan Subject: Highlight Date: 13/12/2021 12:51:35 PM

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 Number: 3 Author: 28015926 Subject: Sticky Note Date: 17/02/2022 3:51:07 PM

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RN employed at Walgett MPS is 7 full time staff and 1 casual staff.  
EEN employed at Walgett MPS is 0 staff.  
New Grads employed at Walgett MPS is 3 staff.

 Number: 4 Author: ARode Subject: Highlight Date: 9/02/2022 1:55:41 PM

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RN employed at Walgett MPS is 7 full time staff and 1 casual staff.  
EEN employed at Walgett MPS is 0 staff.  
New Grads employed at Walgett MPS is 3 staff.

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