



LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

GENERAL PURPOSE STANDING COMMITTEE NO. 3

BUDGET ESTIMATES 2008-2009

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

General Purpose Standing Committee No. 3

Mental Health

Tuesday 14 October 2008

Answers to be lodged by: Friday 7 November 2008

Budget Estimates Secretariat
Telephone 9230 3528
Fax 9230 2981
budget.estimated@parliament.nsw.gov.au

Questions relating to the portfolio of Mental Health

14 OCTOBER 2008, 12.00 pm – 1.00 pm

Questions from Mrs Pavey

State Government Mini Budget

1. Will any of the current and promised mental health infrastructure projects be axed or delayed in the forthcoming State Mini Budget?
 - a. Which projects may be in doubt?

Reduction of Federal Government Funding for Mental Health

2. Following the Federal Government's announcement in May 2008 of a \$188M cut to mental health nursing incentives, including \$30M of unspent funds from the training component and a \$15.5M reduction in funding for mental health services in rural and remote areas, will you be allocating extra funding from the State Budget to address these shortfalls?
3. The Federal Government flagged cuts to Medicare coverage for people with mental health problems to prevent them from being able to claim consultations with occupational therapists and social workers as well as group therapy sessions. Will you be increasing State funding for these service to ensure people with mental illness in NSW do not miss out on these important treatments?

Re-election Promises

4. What funding was expended to employ extra staff for mental health services, in particular nurses and psychiatrists, in FY 2007/08? How many **additional** staff were employed in these categories in FY 2007/08?
5. How many mental health scholarships were funded in FY 2007/08 and what was the total expenditure? What funding has been allocated for this purpose in 2008/09?
6. What funding was expended to establish a dedicated mental health youth service for young people suffering first time psychosis in FY 2007/08 and what funding has been allocated for FY 2008/09?
7. What funding was expended on employment of additional staff to deal with mental health emergencies, in conjunction with NSW Police and the Ambulance Service in FY 2007/08? How many **extra staff** were employed? What funding have you allocated for this purpose in FY 2008/09?

8. What funding was expended on the establishment of specialist services for mental health care for older people and indigenous people in FY 2007/08? What funding has been allocated for FY 2008/09?

Pre 2008-09 Budget Promises

9. How many 24 hour Community Mental Health Emergency Care programs are currently operational from hospitals in NSW?
10. How many extra doctors have been recruited to expand the community mental health rehabilitation program to date?

Psychiatric Emergency Care Centres (announced in July 2005)

11. Are all the Psychiatric Emergency Care Centres (PECC) fully staffed with all beds available for use?
12. What are the operational staff numbers at each of the nine PECCs?
13. What is the status of the PECCs for Wyong, Blacktown and Wollongong?

Older Persons Mental Health Unit

14. There are 6 funded positions for registered nurses to work in Older Persons Mental Health facilities split between Nowra, having four positions and Ulladulla having two positions. Can you confirm that only 3 of these positions have been filled, and if so when do you intend filling the remaining three positions to ensure these patients received adequate support?

Funds for Aboriginal Mental Health Staff

15. What funding was allocated to Aboriginal Health Centres for mental health workers?
- How much of these funds were actually expended in the FY 2007/08?
 - What happened to the non-expended funds for the financial year due to non availability of staff?

Mental Health Service Staff

16. The 2008/09 Budget Estimates forecast an increase in full-time employee in Mental Health Services by 220 in 12 months (9,749 - 07/08 to 9,969 – 08/09). Considering that staff levels have only increased by 162 EFT since 2005, do you believe this increase in appropriately qualified staff is achievable and how do you intend to achieve it?

17. Acute Mental Health Service overnight separations are forecast to increase by 10% in FY 08/09 from 32,962 to 36,212 and Non-acute Mental Health inpatient days are also forecast to rise by over 10% so how can an increase in staff of just over 2% manage these work loads?
18. Minister, with the average employee separation rate from the health service being 14.9%, has the forecast 2% staff increase in Mental Health Services taken into account these separation rates?

Emergency Departments

19. The presentation of people with mental illness at Emergency Department has exceeded all levels since recording commenced in 2004. What funding has been allocated to ensure the security, safety and protection of staff and other patients?
20. Can you advise if there are at least two qualified mental health nurses on duty in the Emergency Departments at all times in all major hospitals across the State?

Child Sexual Assault in Aboriginal Communities

21. Have you received any additional funding, as part of the Government's Interagency Plan to Tackle Child Sexual Assault in Aboriginal Communities, or been called upon to provide assistance with resources?

Sentinel Events Review Committee Report

22. What funding has been allocated to address the recommendations of the Sentinel Events Review Committee?
23. What funding commitment will be made to ensure future Tracking Tragedy reports will guide improvements at mental health facilities?