

MINISTER FOR MENTAL HEALTH & HEALTHY LIFESTYLES

BUDGET ESTIMATES - QUESTION ANSWERED

On 10 October 2012, during NSW Health's appearance before the General Purpose Standing Committee No. 2, the Hon Helen Westwood MLC asked a question on page 10 of the Transcript, which was taken on notice, concerning the impact of the Social and Community Services Award on funding to Non-Government Organisations.

The Hon. PAUL GREEN: In respect of the Western New South Wales portfolio, I have been advised that the Royal Flying Doctor Service has built a number of houses in Broken Hill for much-needed medical staff. However, with the service's expansion an additional three houses are required. Is the Government providing any funding? If so, how much is it contributing to assist this situation?

Mr KEVIN HUMPHRIES: I will take the housing part of the question on notice because I am not aware of that issue; to my knowledge, we have not been approached about that. The Royal Flying Doctor Service is based rurally in Dubbo and Broken Hill. The Broken Hill base is quite unusual in that it is a partnership not just with the Far West Area Health Service but also with Sydney university to assess and put in place some health planning, particularly around the chronic disease program. One thing we have done with the Royal Flying Doctor Service, which will be driving an additional need to recruit staff, is partner with some philanthropic groups—for instance, the Gonski Group—to run dental clinics around the more remote parts of western New South Wales, such as Wilcannia, Menindee, Bourke, Lightning Ridge and Walgett to name a few. Off the back of that we have been able to boost our mental health support. Given that Healthy Lifestyles includes oral health, that ticks a couple of our boxes, but additional mental health support services are also going in on that flight. Over time, I expect additional demand for staffing out there. If the service wants to approach us that is something we would be able to address.

The Hon. PAUL GREEN: Could you take that question on notice? It would be helpful to get back to us if there is anything going that way. My next question deals with Healthy Lifestyles. Given that 89 per cent of children between the ages of four and five spend more than two hours watching television and DVDs every day, and given that kids usually snack on foods high in sugar, salt and fat when watching television, what government Healthy Lifestyles initiatives exist to target sedentary behaviour in children?

Mr KEVIN HUMPHRIES: That is a good question. Obviously, we do not take a parental role in some of those things.

The Hon. PAUL GREEN: I understand.

ANSWER

I am advised:

The Commonwealth Government provides funding for the general practice services provided by the Royal Flying Doctor Service based in Broken Hill and the NSW Government provides \$4.2 million per annum to support the aero-medical retrieval and patient transfer services.

The Royal Flying Doctor Service has recently completed three new houses in Broken Hill funded through a Commonwealth regional development grant. Should a request for funding be received by the Far West Local Health District or the NSW Ministry of Health such a request would be considered in the context of the service and capital planning already underway in the Far West Local Health District.

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The Hon. HELEN WESTWOOD: Given that there is possible growth in non-government organisations, have you assessed yet what the increase cost will be for those services to meet obligations under the Social and Community Services award and equal pay case outcome? A number of these organisations will be employing workers under that award. Have you assessed yet what that amount will be and advised Treasury?

Mr KEVIN HUMPHRIES: No, not as far as I am aware.

The Hon. HELEN WESTWOOD: Mr McGrath, have you turned your mind to that? We are talking next year. Surely you have some understanding of what the cost implication will be and will have advised Treasury of it.

Mr McGRATH: I would have to refer that question to the Chief Financial Officer, because there would be a global process throughout the ministry for managing the risk to non-government organisations across the whole of the Ministry of Health portfolio. I am not in a position to respond to that specific question on behalf of the Mental Health portfolio.

The Hon. HELEN WESTWOOD: Would you take that question on notice?

Mr McGRATH: Yes.

The Hon. HELEN WESTWOOD: Thank you.

ANSWER

I am advised:

That NSW Health is in discussions with NSW Treasury in relation to the likely cost implications of implementing the Social and Community Services Award – Equal Remuneration Order.

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On 10 October 2012, during NSW Health's appearance before the General Purpose Standing Committee No. 2, the Hon Adam Searle MLC asked a question on page 10 of the Transcript, which was taken on notice, concerning \$114 million that was underspent.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: Minister, capital spending in your portfolio for the last budget year was originally proposed to be nearly \$114 million, but that has been revised down to just under \$24 million. I am dealing with Budget Paper No. 3, page 6-9. That is an underspend or a cut of \$90 million. Can you tell the Committee what works originally proposed were not delivered in the financial year?

Mr KEVIN HUMPHRIES: I will refer the question to Mr McGrath. But everything that we proposed, as far as I am advised, has been delivered. In terms of new works, the budget this year is an increase of some \$72 million. Part of that—

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: Minister, I am referring to the 2011-12 financial year and to Budget Paper No. 3, page 6-9. Originally, in last year's budget, the Government proposed \$114 million worth of capital spending, but has delivered only \$24 million. What was the reason for that revision downwards? Also, what works that were proposed to be delivered on budget day last year were not delivered, and why?

Mr KEVIN HUMPHRIES: I could take that on notice.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: Please do.

Mr KEVIN HUMPHRIES: But I can tell you that everything that we committed to is either delivered or underway. Part of the existing budget going forward—

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: This is the \$48 million that you are proposing this year?

Mr KEVIN HUMPHRIES: Of the \$72 million. It depends what you define as a new project. But I can tell you that new capital works will be in Goulburn, Prince of Wales, Nepean, Bathurst and Orange. There is \$16.5 million of new funding going there, as opposed to what we committed to before—whether it was Wagga Wagga, Dubbo, Nepean, Blacktown, Mount Druitt or Liverpool. All those projects are either underway or have been completed. But we can get you a breakdown of that.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: Just to be very clear: you proposed spending of nearly \$114 million in capital last year and you have delivered less than \$24 million. This year you say you are going to deliver \$48 million. I would like to know what was not delivered. What projects did you not deliver that you were going to deliver?

Mr KEVIN HUMPHRIES: Again, I suspect that is a bridge too far.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: I am happy for you to take the question on notice.

Mr KEVIN HUMPHRIES: Some of those projects are obviously subject to progress and progress payments.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: I am very interested in the breakdown, which I am happy for you to take on notice.

ANSWER

The process for allocating the 2011-12 capital works program across service programs included a mix of identifying projects directly attributable to mental health (\$63.4M) and capital program costs indirectly attributable to mental health (\$50.4M).

This approach was not applied when preparing the 2012 State Budget paper information as a change in methodology was adopted in which only those capital projects that were directly attributable as stand-alone mental health projects were included.

The value of the 2011-12 capital works program estimated to be incurred during the financial year was impacted by wet weather conditions, delays in the commencement of a number of projects and some project redesign. Specific mental health projects impacted in 2011/2 include Hornsby Acute Inpatient facility, POW MH Intensive Care unit and Sydney Children's Hospital Child and Adolescent Inpatient Unit. These delays are not expected to impact on completion dates.

Under expenditures incurred in 2011/12 are carried forward to future years to allow for project completion. A full listing of capital works ETC and 2012/13 allocations is included in Budget Paper No. 4.

MINISTER FOR WESTERN NEW SOUTH WALES

BUDGET ESTIMATES - QUESTION ANSWERED

On 10 October 2012, during NSW Health's appearance before the General Purpose Standing Committee No. 2, the Hon Mick Veitch MLC asked a question on page 12 of the Transcript, which was taken on notice, concerning an update on additional works around Bogan Gate, Tottenham and Rankin Springs export grain lines.

The Hon. MICK VEITCH: Minister, I have one further question of you as Minister for Western New South Wales. There was in my view—and I might be biased—an outstanding report prepared by the Standing Committee on State Development regarding economic impacts.

Mr KEVIN HUMPHRIES: It was outstanding.

The Hon. MICK VEITCH: Have you had a chance to read that report?

Mr KEVIN HUMPHRIES: I have.

The Hon. MICK VEITCH: I understand we are still awaiting the Government response to the recommendations. In your capacity as Minister for Western New South Wales, are there any recommendations that you are particularly pursuing implementation of?

Mr KEVIN HUMPHRIES: Certainly one that I know you felt strongly about was the Bells Line of Way.

The Hon. MICK VEITCH: Particularly the preservation of the corridor.

Mr KEVIN HUMPHRIES: Yes. One of the things that we committed to in the first term, which I think was articulated by the Deputy Premier as well, was to preserve the corridor for the Bells Line of Way. That project is an interesting one because it is an intergenerational project. On the one hand, you have planning for the future happening under this Government by preserving that corridor, but you are also looking at making sure that the commitment we made—commenced under your Government, which got a bit wayward at one stage—was for completion of the Windsor to Katoomba four-lane highway across that section, which I think is earmarked to be completed by 2015. So on the one hand we are planning for the future, but we are also upgrading that infrastructure as it goes forward. I think that is a good thing; and it is a sensible way to go.

The Hon. MICK VEITCH: I am particularly interested in the recommendation regarding the Blayney to Demondrille rail line and whether or not you are pursuing that as Minister for Western New South Wales.

Mr KEVIN HUMPHRIES: I notice that got a good run, and I noted that you gave three cheers for that one as well, being not too far away. It is no accident that I think nearly \$300 million of grain line funding was announced five or six weeks ago by the Minister for Roads and Maritime Services. That funding will see the upgrade of the three export grain lines, which are the Moree to Mungindi line, the Walgett line and the Coonamble line. A lot of that work is being undertaken already. You will see additional works down around Bogan Gate, Tottenham and Rankin Springs. I am not sure specifically where that line is up to at this stage, but I will find out for you.

The Hon. MICK VEITCH: Will you take that on notice?

Mr KEVIN HUMPHRIES: Yes. That is part of a discussion that commenced in 2004 with the Grains Council. Queensland previously had undertaken a robust discussion between rural landholders, the grain growers and road and rail providers, and chose to sacrifice, in some parts of that State, road over rail. That is why their rail network became more robust in some parts of the State and why in other parts of the State their roads are better than their rail. They worked their situation out some years ago. We never continued that discussion. It continued on in 2007. In the meantime, we had pretty much a 10-year period where there was no investment in rural freight, particularly when it came to rail, so particularly west of the Divide. That discussion has been had. The Minister, to his credit, is the first Minister to set up a freight division within the Roads and Maritime Services portfolio, and I think you will see a lot more in that space in the near future.

ANSWER

I am advised:

In early 2010, a Ministerial Taskforce was established to report on whether a business case could be developed for the revival of services based on firm commitments to use the line. The Taskforce determined that a business case does exist providing that risk is allocated appropriately amongst participants, not just Government, and that industry indications of support are translated into firm contractual commitments. TfNSW is now working with the Local Governments of Blayney, Cowra, Weddin, Harden and Young to develop a MoU for the operation of the line based on a sound business case, clear commitment from industry to use the line and consideration of an integrated approach to the use of transport infrastructure.

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On 10 October 2012, during NSW Health's appearance before the General Purpose Standing Committee No. 2, the Hon Adam Searle MLC asked a question on page 12 of the Transcript, which was taken on notice, concerning whether changes to Tobacco legislation will apply to temporary structures such as tents and marquees.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: Minister, are the smoking restrictions prescribed in the Tobacco Legislation Amendment Act which will be introduced from January next year applicable to temporary structures such as tents and marquees where food is served, particularly in pavilions or marquees set up for racing fixtures and other events that take place in country New South Wales?

Mr KEVIN HUMPHRIES: That is a good question. I will ask Dr Chant to answer it.

Dr CHANT: There are different timings of the different elements of the tobacco control legislation. Those elements of the Act with restrictions around smoking within playgrounds and seated sporting areas will commence next year. The legislative elements in relation to food premises do not commence until later, in 2014.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: When they do commence will they apply to marquees and other temporary fixtures at country New South Wales events such as racing fixtures and other shows?

Dr CHANT: There are a number of elements of the Act that interplay. I would be happy to provide specific advice on the specific circumstances rather than just a generalisation. For example, there is interplay between the four metres from an entry and exit and whether they are on a sporting field. There are a number of interplays.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: Perhaps you can take that question on notice.

Dr CHANT: Thank you. I will.

While this question was asked of and taken on notice by Minister Humphries, please note that tobacco legislation is under the portfolio responsibilities of the Minister for Health and Medical Research. The response to this question has been provided by Minister Skinner, Minister for Health and Medical Research.

ANSWER

I am advised:

Smoking is prohibited in enclosed or substantially enclosed public places under the *Smoke-free Environment Act 2000*. Depending on the configuration, the internal area of temporary structures such as tents and marquees or pavilions set up for racing fixtures may be enclosed or substantially enclosed areas and therefore smoke-free under the current law.

The changes set out in the *Tobacco Legislation Amendment Act 2012* relate to public outdoor areas and prohibit smoking in a range of public outdoor areas.

From 7 January 2013, smoking will also be prohibited in outdoor spectator areas, including marquees, at public sports grounds and other recreational areas while organised sporting events are being held.

From 6 July 2015 prohibiting smoking in commercial outdoor dining areas. A commercial outdoor dining area is:

- a seated dining area – an area in which seating is provided and in which food that has been purchased and served on plates or packaged for immediate consumption is consumed - but only while food is being consumed or is available for purchase and consumption there.
- within 4 metres of a seated dining area on licensed premises or at a restaurant.
- within 10 metres of a place at a food fair where food is sold or supplied for consumption at the event.

It is expected that in many temporary structures where food is served, such as in pavilions or marquees set up for racing fixtures, smoking will be prohibited as either the space will be an enclosed or substantially enclosed public place or the area will be a commercial outdoor dining area. However, this will ultimately depend on the structure and configuration of the specific area.