



LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

GENERAL PURPOSE STANDING COMMITTEE NO. 2

BUDGET ESTIMATES 2008-2009

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

General Purpose Standing Committee No. 2

Health, Central Coast

Monday 13 October 2008

Answers to be lodged by: Thursday 6 November 2008

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

Questions relating to the portfolios of Health and Central Coast

13 OCTOBER 2008, 9.15 am – 1.00 pm

Questions from Ms Hale

1. Road collapse – Gosford Council LGA
 - a. What steps is the government taking in respect of roads such as Pearl Beach Drive, on the Central Coast, where a council may simply not be able to afford to fix a road?
 - b. Was the transfer of the road to the Council from the RTA a factor in the Somersby Rd. collapse, or did that Council have sufficient funds to undertake the work?
2. Coal and Allied developments at Catherine Hill Bay and Gwandalan
 - a. What are the latest developments regarding the Coal and Allied proposal for Gwandalan?
3. Mangrove Mountain and Coca Cola Amatil
 - a. How much ground-water is Cola-Cola Amatil permitted to extract at Mangrove Mountain?
 - b. How much do they pay in licence fees per annum?
 - c. Are you aware that farmers in the area report groundwater loss?
 - d. Does the government have any plans to ban bottled water as it is (a) unnecessary for drinking (b) environmentally damaging and (c) damaging agricultural lands?
4. Tillegra Dam
 - a. Will Tillegra Dam go ahead?
 - b. Will Central Coast residents pay for Tillegra Dam?
5. Fleet Cars
 - a. What is the percentage of hybrids in the car fleet associated with the Minister for the Central Coast portfolio (if any?)
 - b. Is there a mechanism within the agency to reward staff who choose not to exercise an entitlement to a fleet vehicle as a part of their package but use public transport instead (if relevant)?
 - c. What car does the head of the various departments drive (if relevant)?

Questions from Ms Rhiannon

6. The Healthelink pilot is currently being evaluated and should be completed in August 2008. When will the evaluation be made publicly available?
7. The e-Health Future Directions Briefing Paper for AHMAC meeting 4 October 2007 ([http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/B58193B329DDD77ACA25740F001F32D0/\\$File/AHIC%20eHealth%20Fut.Dir%20brief.paper-final.pdf](http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/B58193B329DDD77ACA25740F001F32D0/$File/AHIC%20eHealth%20Fut.Dir%20brief.paper-final.pdf)) referred to a successful e-health implementation in the NT but will not provide it. Will all reference data used for the Healthelink evaluation be publicly available?
 - a. If not, why not.
 - b. If so, will the data be available at the same time as the evaluation is made public?

8. When evaluating the project, will KPMG take the Australian e-health workforce shortage into account? If so, how?
9. Will KPMG also evaluate the e-health workforce shortages in the context of a more general shortage of Australian clinicians? If so, how?
10. What are the KPMG terms of reference for the evaluation?
11. Were any private health providers involved in the Healthelink pilot (i.e. a private consultant or a GP in a public hospital). If so, what was their feedback on the trial?

Questions from Ms Parker

12. Minister, when was the application to build Kincumber Fire Station lodged?
 - a. Was the application ever lodged with Gosford Council, if so when? If not, why not?
 - b. Is the application before the Department of Planning?
 - c. Where is the site to be located?
 - d. When was the acquisition for land lodged for the site?
13. There is no allocation of funds in the 2008 budget for the commencement of construction of Kariiong High School.
 - a. Why is there no allocation?
 - b. When will funding be provided to commence construction?
 - c. Where is the school to be located?
 - d. The budget papers state construction will be commenced in 2008 and finish in 2010. It is now October, when do you plan 2008 construction to commence?
14. Minister, on 10 September this year the Government announced it was preparing to charge commuters to park at railway stations. Given that the Central Coast is the largest commuter region in NSW and they are already forced into overcrowded, unreliable and slower trains –
 - a. As Minister for the Central Coast, what will you do to stop this happening?
 - b. What representations have you made to the Minister for Transport on this issue?
 - c. Will you table that correspondence? If not, why not?
15. Minister, what representations have you made to the Minister for Transport about getting more trains and faster timetables for the Central Coast to Sydney line?
 - a. Will you table that correspondence? If not, why not?
16. Minister are you aware that the population of the ACT is approximately 339,000 and yet the ACT has 829 full time, operational Police and 10 - 24hr Police Stations, while the Central Coast only has only 419 operational Police with 4 full-time operational Police Stations?
 - a. What have you done to have the police numbers allocated to the Central Coast increased?
 - b. What representations have you made to the Minister for Police to get more operational Police on the Central Coast? Will you table that correspondence? If not, why not?
 - c. What representations have you made to the Minister for Police to get more full-time operational Police Stations on the Central Coast? If not, why not? Will you table that correspondence?

- d. What representations did you make to the Minister for Police and the Treasurer to prevent the sale of Kincumber Police Station? Will you table that correspondence? If not, why not?
17. Terrigal Police Station was operational 7am to 11pm and had detectives as well. It has now been reduced to a shopfront from 7am to 7pm operation, with only one officer despite considerable community concern from the Chamber of Commerce and others.
 - a. What representations have you made to reinstate Terrigal Police Station? If not, why not? Will you table these?
18. Minister, what funding is made available to Central Coast sporting groups by your Government?
19. Minister, what representations did you make to the Treasurer to secure funding for the Central Coast Sports Academy? Will you table that correspondence? If not, why not?
20. The recent Legislative Council inquiry into the Ambulance Service heard evidence of bullying in the Service.
 - a. What action have you taken to remedy this?
21. As Minister for Central Coast, have you received complaints about bullying of workers in the workplace on the Central Coast?
 - a. What action have you taken, specifically for the Central Coast, to prevent bullying of workers on the Central Coast?
 - b. Have you received complaints about the bullying of workers by customers on the Central Coast?
 - c. Do you have any programs to encourage customers to treat workers in the workplace they are visiting appropriately?
 - i. If not, will you seek to implement a program of community education?
 - d. How many reports of bullying in the workplace on the Central Coast were there in the last 12 months?
 - e. What programs are in place on the Central Coast in relation to bullying?
 - i. Firstly, in the workplace?
 - ii. Secondly, in schools?
 - f. How much money is allocated within the health budget for anti-bullying programs in the hospitals and ambulance stations on the Central Coast?
 - g. How much money is allocated within the health budget for anger management programs in NSW?
 - h. How many people attended anger management programs sponsored by the Department of Health in the last 12 months?
 - i. Does your department conduct anger management programs on the Central Coast?
 - j. How many people attended anger management programs on the Central Coast sponsored by the Department of Health?
 - i. Are there more women than men?
22. Have you made representations to the Minister for Gaming and Racing about an incident at Iguana's Waterfront Restaurant on 6 June 2008?
 - a. Will you table these representations?

23. Have you made representations to the Minister for Police, or the Commissioner of Police, about an incident at Iguana's Waterfront Restaurant on 6 June 2008?
 - a. Will you table these representations?

24. Does the Central Coast regional plan include a marina development for the Gosford waterfront?
 - a. How will the Iguana's Restaurant fit into the proposed development?
 - b. Have you had any discussions with the management of Iguana's Restaurant about the proposed marina development, if so what were the discussions?
 - c. Have you made any representations to the Minister for Lands about the proposed marina development?

25. Did you, in your capacity as a Minister, undertake to Parliament not to drive a motor vehicle on public streets in May 2008?
 - a. Did you, on 6 June 2008, drive a motor vehicle on a public street at Gosford?

26. Minister you are aware of lost man-hours in bed block on the Central Coast are double those elsewhere in NSW?
 - a. What action are you taking to remediate this?
 - b. How much money will you allocate?
 - c. When will the problem be resolved? Please give us a date so we can evaluate progress.

27. In 2003 the CEO of the Ambulance Service identified the Central Coast as having the worst demand/staffing ratio.
 - a. Are you able to say if this has been resolved?
 - b. The Ambulance Service stated it is not resolved, by what date will you have the demand/staffing ratio raised to acceptable standards comparable to elsewhere in NSW?

28. Last month, your predecessor, Reba Meagher stated, and I quote: (Sun Newspaper) "the Central Coast is well staffed and equipped to handle all emergency calls."
 - a. Why is it that crews as recently as this month are still coming from Wahrenonga, St Ives, Hamilton, Belmont, Kurri Kurri and Cessnock as primary response to emergency calls?
 - b. The NSW Fire Brigade has constructed new stations on the Coast and has increased its crewing to match population increases on the Coast, in fact the fire station has constructed four new stations, along with an additional 60 staff. The number of ambulance stations and staff have remained the same.
 - i. How is this justifiable?
 - ii. Will you undertake to increase staff levels?
 - iii. What planning is there for new ambulance stations? Where?

29. The ambulance service state there has been no increase on night shifts in the last 15 years, despite population increase in that period of more than 30%.
 - a. How is this justified, especially given the higher than average incidence of aged people on the Central Coast?
 - b. How many cars are in fact allocated for night shift on the Central Coast?
 - c. What has happened to the rescue truck given the huge number of visitors to the Coast over the Christmas holidays?

30. As Minister for Health, and as former Minister for Industrial Relations, how do you justify the new death and disability award, which those over sixty are still required to pay, even when they are not entitled to any remuneration if injured or killed?
31. Are you aware that the Ambulance Service complained that, frequently on the Central Coast, patients are being transported by supervisors in the front of cars due to staff shortages?
 - a. What action is being taken to remedy this?
32. The Health Services Union recently called for the dismissal of the CEO of the Ambulance Service. Given that front line ambulance officers have lost confidence in him, why do you still retain him?
33. How do Gosford and Wyong Hospitals emergency admission delays compare to the statewide average?
 - a. Is it a fact that these are among the worst in NSW? If not, why not?
 - b. What action are you taking to remedy this?
34. You are aware that it is quite common for ambulances to be delayed for periods of up to 6 hours at Gosford Hospital to discharge emergency patients.
 - a. What action have you taken to remedy this?
35. Does the Department of Health intend to take away meal penalties?
 - a. Does it intend to take away the meal hour and replace this with two 30 minute crib breaks?
36. What childminding facilities does the Department plan to develop for the Central Coast ambulance staff?
37. The population of Warnervale and Northern Wyong is expected to increase by 60,000.
 - a. What preparations has the ambulance service made for this?
 - b. When will the ambulance service construct stations at:
 - i. Kincumber?
 - ii. Warnervale?
 - c. How much is being allocated?
38. Minister, did the Chairman of the Medical Staff Council at Wyong Hospital resign, or threaten to resign, because of your treatment of medical staff at Wyong Hospital two weeks ago?
 - a. If so, how do you explain your conduct?
 - b. Do the Central Coast hospitals face a problem in recruiting and retaining qualified staff?
 - c. Did your conduct at Wyong Hospital act as a discouragement for qualified staff to work in public hospitals?
 - d. Does Wyong Hospital have a program to implement the anti-bullying policy of the Department of Health?
 - i. How is this program carried out?
39. When will Gosford Hospital receive a public radiology service?

40. How much will it cost to install?
41. Where is it on your priority list?
42. Three days before the 2007 state election, the then Premier Morris Iemma, accompanied by the four Labor candidates for the Central Coast seats, promised a \$27 million roads program for the Central Coast, including major works at the Brisbane Water/Central Coast Highway intersection.
- The RTA has allocated \$3000 for 2008/09 for the upgrade of the intersection of Central Coast Highway, Brisbane Water Drive and Manns Road at West Gosford, yet there is no allocation in the 2008/09 State budget for works on that intersection.
 - Why has no funding for works to commence been allocated?
 - When will funding be allocated?
 - How can this promise be fulfilled prior to the 2011 state election?
 - What representations have you made to implement this promise? Will you table the representations?
43. 500,000 was allocated in 2007 for preparatory works on this road. Assuming the works have been carried out, why has no money been allocated for road upgrade?
- When will money be allocated?
 - What representations have you made for the allocation of funds for this much-needed upgrade?
 - Will you table the representations?
44. Minister, what plans do you have to rejuvenate the Gosford CBD?
45. What representations have you made to the Minister for State and Regional Development about Gosford CBD? Will you table that correspondence? If not, why not?
46. Did you consult with local businesses on the Central Coast Highway from Ocean View Drive to Tumbi Road before, during, or after works to ascertain how the works would affect their business operations?
- If so, what were the findings?
 - If not, why were they not consulted?
47. Were there any claims by businesses for compensation for loss of income due to the road works?
- If so, how much were they claiming for?
 - Have any businesses been compensated? If so, how much did they receive?
 - If not, why have they not been compensated? Will they be compensated?
48. Funding has been allocated to commence the upgrade of the Central Coast Highway from Carlton Road to Ocean View Road.
- Have local businesses in this area been consulted as to how the works will affect their business operations?
 - If so, what were the findings?
 - If not, why have they not been consulted?

- iii. Have any funds been allocated for compensation of loss of business during works?
49. Why have local suppliers lost their contract to supply their products to the Central Coast hospitals?
50. Were all suppliers notified their services were no longer required?
- a. When were they notified?
 - i. Were they given sufficient notification to re-tender? Or, were they given an opportunity to re-tender?
 - b. Why were their services no longer required?
 - c. Are there still accounts outstanding to the previous suppliers?
 - i. Which suppliers are still owed money?
 - ii. If so, how much is still owing? When will the accounts be settled?
 - iii. What representations have you made to ensure these accounts are finalised? Will you table those representations?
51. Who has the contract to supply the hospitals presently?
52. If the NSW government is placing the ongoing development and future success of the PADP solely with the recommendations held within the PwC review of 2007 does Enable have any plans if, like the Program of Appliances for Disabled People Information System (PADPIS), it all goes wrong? Will we be back to square one?
53. Has there been any communications between NSW Health and NSW treasury to raise concerns over lengthy and expanding waiting lists that the budget is incapable of resolving in one financial year?
54. Can NSW Health please provide the inquiry with the cumulative costs of the 2 formal reviews (Carla Cranny and PwC) and any other PADP review costs? It would be interesting to note how many times and at what cost it takes the NSW government to realise that a program is underfunded.
55. Can the minister confirm that since 1999, and maybe even further back, that there has been a consistent message coming to his office both internally and throughout the disability sector that people are waiting long periods for items of equipment and that PADP was continually underfunded? This in spite of increased allocations of funding.
56. Can the minister confirm whether the creation of the Enable NSW advisory council is an attempt to seek governance form DADHC that has been missing? I ask this question with relation to this MOU as quoted in the PwC review:

The MOU makes clear that this funding was provided to NSW Health under the Disability Services Act (NSW) 1993 and that both departments are required to ensure that the use of the funds conforms with the Act. The MOU provides for ADD (Now called DADHC) to have a responsibility to review the PADP guidelines to ensure that the guidelines comply with the Services Act. Should ADD determine following a review that the funding of PADP is not compliant with the Services Act, NSW Health must ensure that (any) non-compliance is rectified as soon as possible' (Clause 6.4). Under the MOU, the role of ADD is to provide notice in writing in order to require NSW Health to rectify any non-compliance and to withdraw the funding."

57. Has DADHC helped with raising funding and governance issues; if so to what degree and in what capacity?
58. What is the status of any review of the First Responders program (SES + NSW Ambulance Service) and what does the review say and what is the Government's response?
59. What is the breakdown of staff numbers at the new mental health facility in Lismore, including total number of staff, number of staff in the aged section and number of staff in the adolescent section?

In relation to people living in the township of Harrington in the Port Macquarie electorate:

60. Are you aware that Harrington, a community with both a growing population and an aged population, is extremely concerned about its lack of an ambulance station (relying on Taree ambulances) and no after-hours doctor?
61. Are you aware that that concern has been elevated by a recent incident in which a Harrington resident suffered a heart attack, the ambulance was called but when his condition was still deteriorating, the ambulance service was contacted and it was discovered that no ambulance had yet left Taree?
62. Will you acknowledge that a growing town like Harrington needs an ambulance station, or at least give consideration to facilitating a First Responders program for that locality?

In light of the former Treasurer's claim that the health ten year capital program is overcommitted to the tune of half-a-billion dollars and that projects in the wing cannot be accommodated within the existing capital budget:

63. When will the Port Macquarie Base Hospital Fourth Pod will be built?
64. How much money has been allocated to fix major flaws in the Bathurst hospital, when will the work be complete and at what total cost?
65. When will stage 3 of the Nepean Hospital redevelopment go ahead?
66. When will the long-promised Northern Beaches Hospital at Frenchs Forest, which is part of the recently release Northern Sydney Central Coast Clinical Services Plan, be complete?
67. When will the Lismore Hospital stage 3 redevelopment be delivered?
68. When will the construction of the long promised Central West Lachlan Valley project commence?
69. Will construction of the Tamworth Hospital redevelopment commence in this Parliamentary term?
70. When will work on the long promised redevelopment of Wagga Wagga Hospital begin?
71. When will work on the promised new Bega Valley Hospital begin?

In relation to the CERNER FirstNet IT program:

72. Please list the hospitals that are currently using FirstNet, and those that are planned to have the system in place and when.
73. How much has already been allocated to install and implement FirstNet and what is the expected total cost for each Area Health Service?
74. On recent NSW Emergency Department Performance Figure reports there is a statement "Due to problems with the implementation of a new emergency information system (Cerner FirstNet), following data are excluded from triage performance and emergency admission performance calculations:" – will this data ever become available? What was the nature of the problems?
75. How do you respond to complaints from clinicians that there was grossly inadequate clinical input into the requirements of this software from the start?
76. Are you aware of serious concerns about FirstNet raised by front-line emergency department doctors which include complaints that patients have been 'lost' because data has gone missing; the time it takes to enter data cuts into time that should be spent treating patients; that simple tasks like ordering a blood test that once took 2 minutes now take 15 minutes; that FirstNet is unable to produce meaningful clinical data to enable comparisons of effectiveness of treatment.
77. Are you aware that many senior clinicians are now so opposed to the FirstNet that there is talk of us simply refusing to use the system?
78. Given that the Victorian Auditor-General Des Pearson in April this year made a damning report into Victoria's roll out of FirstNet including significant time delays, budget blowouts and that the CERNER clinical system was not working at any of the hospital sites at which it had been installed and the significant discontent among NSW clinicians at hospitals where the FirstNet system has been implemented, why is NSW apparently committed to software that is simply not up to the job, and which appears not able to be rectified?

In relation to Program for Appliances for Disabled People (PADP):

79. There was an \$11 million 'one-off' top up from both the State and Federal Governments recently to address the waiting list backlog for equipment. Will this funding become part of the recurrent funding for PADP in future years?
80. Why are the reforms that are currently planned for PADP in response to the Price Waterhouse Coopers review going to take till the end of 2010 to implement, when the review came out in 2006?
81. As part of the changes to PADP, will you be scrapping the \$100 co-payment?
82. How much does it cost to administer the co-payment and how much do you actually raise by charging the co-payment?

83. Is it acceptable that people with a disability can be waiting 3 years for equipment?
84. There are 262 applications to the PADP for equipment that have been waiting more than a year. Is this acceptable? What are you doing about it?
85. One of the most common complaints about the PADP are delays which mean original equipment recommendations are no longer appropriate, particularly in the case of growing children. How will you streamline the application process to eliminate problems like this?

In relation to overdue accounts:

86. As at today's date (October 13th) what is the total value of accounts over 45 days old owed by each of the eight Area Health Services and the Children's Hospital at Westmead; and how many overdue accounts are there in each area?
87. Please list the hospitals that are behind in paying doctor's salaries or fees for services they have provided in treating patients in those hospitals?
88. How many doctors have had to chase up payment of their salaries/fees?
89. How many other hospital staff have had delays in payment of their salaries or fees? Please list the hospitals and the categories of staff.
90. In 2002 the Auditor General found "AHSs have a track record of late payment of creditors. The problem was widespread across a large number of AHSs, both rural and metropolitan." Three years later in 2005 the Auditor General found "NSW Health still does not always pay its suppliers promptly because not all Areas have the necessary funds. A lot of Area resources are used to manage suppliers' complaints about this problem." NSW Health said the problem would be eliminated "when it implements the shared corporate services with a central payment system".

Given NSW Health has been acutely aware of this problem for 6 years and there were promises it would be eliminated why are businesses still waiting months and in some cases years for debts to be paid?

In relation to volunteers in hospitals:

91. How much money do you expect to generate for Sydney West Area Health Service by leasing public hospital floor space to retailers at the expense of volunteers?
92. Will you guarantee that volunteers such as the pink ladies and hospital auxiliary will not lose their fundraising stalls at hospitals in SWAHS?
93. What percentage of the commercial retailers revenue will go to the hospital?

94. Will this revenue go toward paying for equipment identified as needed by hospital staff or will it go to general revenue?
95. Given that volunteers raise considerable amounts of money for the hospitals, for example the Mount Druitt Hospital volunteers have raised \$1 million for the purchase of essential equipment, how will already cash strapped hospitals buy vital equipment which was traditionally purchased by the volunteers?
96. Are there similar plans at all Area Health Services to lease public hospital floor space to retailers at the expense of volunteers?
97. How many Enrolled Nurses are employed by NSW Health?
98. Why have changes been made which mean that Enrolled Nurses can no longer undertake the TAFE component of their training whilst employed as nurses?
99. Have you been advised that changes to the Trainee Enrolled Nurse program which will now require participants to do an expensive one-year TAFE preliminary component BEFORE starting their employment and therefore without earning, will limit the ability of many people from taking up this nursing option?
100. What impact will the loss of Enrolled Nurses have on hospitals struggling with too few nurses?

In relation to aged care residential facilities operated by the NSW Government:

101. How much money was spent on the review of the 11 NSW Government run aged care residential facilities completed in May 2006 which was never released?
102. Is the reason why the Department of Health is conducting yet another review because recommendations in the first didn't suit government plans?
103. If this is not the case will you now release the report of the initial review given this was the commitment made to residents of Wollondilly who have been fighting for years to retain the Queen Victoria Memorial Hospital at Picton?
104. How much was allocated last financial year to CHC Australia for the provision of emergency medical helicopter retrieval services?
105. How does this compare to the last annual allocation to CareFlight and Westpac LifeSaver for the provision of these services?
106. Are you satisfied that CHC has met all contractual obligations regarding reliability, safety and extended services given the considerable problems that have been highlighted over the past year?

107. How much funding has been allocated to implementation of programs for women and girls with mental illness?
108. Do you consider mental health has a gender dimension?
109. Considering Anorexia Nervosa it is the most fatal of all psychiatric illnesses, what policies, if any, has your office implemented to address the growing problem of eating disorders in teenage women?
110. What is the cost to the NSW Health System for the treatment of Anorexia Nervosa and other eating disorders?
111. How much is each Area Health Service currently over/under budget for the first quarter of the 2008/09 financial year?
112. What is the projected 2008/09 budget over run/underspend for each Area Health Service?
113. For each Area Health Service could you provide the 2008/09 Strategy Benefit Savings Plan, including a description of each saving strategy and the full year targets and projections for savings?
114. Have you received a copy of the correspondence Ambulance Officer Peter Cribbs sent to then Health Minister Reba Meagher on 1 September 2008?
115. What actions have you taken to investigate Mr Cribbs' allegations of nepotism and corrupt conduct within the NSW Ambulance Service?
116. When will you respond to Mr Cribbs' correspondence?

With reference to mortuaries in the state's health facilities:

117. When will an alarm system be installed at Nepean Hospital's mortuary to alert staff if the operating temperature of the mortuary has exceeded the pre-determined level?
118. Could you please provide a list of mortuaries in the state's health facilities that do not have an alarm system to alert staff if the operating temperature of the mortuary has exceeded the pre-determined level?
119. When the NSW Health 'mandatory' policy directive titled *Deceased Persons in Health Facility Mortuaries and Management of Health Facilities Mortuaries* refers to the Federal Department of Health and Ageing's *Guidelines for the Facilities and Operation of Hospital and Forensic Mortuaries* which states: "The operating temperatures of all cooled and freezing facilities should be continuously monitored. The facilities should be fitted with alarms which are activated when the temperature exceeds a predetermined level. Action to be taken if an alarm is activated must be specified in the Mortuary Procedures Manual", why are there health facilities in NSW without the necessary alarm systems?

120. When will all the mortuaries in the state's health facilities be installed with the necessary alarm system?
121. Have the Sydney West Area Health Service executive offices at Nepean Hospital been recently renovated?
122. What was the cost of those renovations?
123. What was the cost of the new desk for the CEO?
124. How much money was spent on salary maintenance by NSW Health and each Area Health Service for displaced staff in 2005/06, 2006/07 and 2007/08?

Questions from Mrs Pavey

In respect to Bathurst Base Hospital:

125. What action is the Greater Western Area Health Service taking to remedy the nurse shortages that have resulted in the closure of 10 beds and their conversion to "surge beds"?
 - a. How long are these beds expected to be in place for?
 - b. Where will the additional nursing staff required to service these 10 "surge beds" be sourced from when the beds are utilised?
126. How many nursing vacancies are there currently at Bathurst Base Hospital?
 - a. How many of these vacancies have been advertised by the Greater Western Area Health Service?
127. What is the estimated completion date for the remediation works at the Hospital?
128. What is the estimated cost of those remediation works?

In respect to the Daffodil Cottage facility in Bathurst:

129. Once current building works at the old Bathurst Hospital are completed will non-cancer care staff currently occupying part of the cottage be moved out of the cottage? If so, when is this expected to occur?
130. Will the Minister guarantee that Daffodil Cottage will continue to be available to fulfil the role for which it was established, namely cancer and palliative care?

In respect to Orange Base Hospital:

131. Has the additional \$35 million required for the new Orange Base Hospital been secured from Treasury?
132. Has a timeline for the completion of the new Orange Base Hospital been established?

133. If so, what is the timeline, including a date for the project's completion?
134. How many nursing vacancies are there currently at Orange Base Hospital?
- a. How many of these vacancies have been advertised by the Greater Western Area Health Service?

In respect to the Orange retrieval helicopter service:

135. Have there been any negotiations between NSW Health or the Minister's Office and the Ambulance Service of NSW in regard to the current retrieval helicopter based in Orange becoming a 24-hour service?
- a. If so, what are the results of these negotiations?
136. Will the Ambulance Service of NSW be provided with the additional funding required to ensure a 24-hour service to the region be locally based rather than the current night-flights from the Sydney basin? If so, how much additional funding is required? If such funds are not to be provided, why not?

In respect to Lourdes Hospital:

137. What is the latest status of the evaluation and review process regarding the development of Lourdes Hospital?
- a. When will NSW Health announce the results of this evaluation?
 - b. When will the Minister announce the Government's response to the latest evaluation?
138. Will NSW Health approve funding for the hospital development? If not, why not?

In respect to Port Macquarie Base Hospital:

139. Does the North Coast Area Health Service have a timetable for the introduction of a cardiac catheterisation unit for Port Macquarie Base Hospital? If so, when will such a unit be established at the Hospital?

In respect to Tweed Hospital:

140. What actions have been taken to remedy the staff shortages in the new 30-bed ward at Tweed Hospital?
- a. Which positions in the Emergency Department are currently still vacant? Please list these positions.
 - b. Which of these vacant positions, if any, have the North Coast Area Health Service advertised?

In respect to the Heart Failure Treatment Program – Out of Hospital Care – at Manning Base Hospital:

141. How many patients have been treated with out-of-hospital care for heart failure under the auspices of Manning Base Hospital and/or Hunter New England Area Health Service in each of 2006-07 and 2007-08?
 - a. For how long has such a program run?
 - b. Has the program been subject to an evaluation? If so, what was the outcome of the evaluation?
 - c. Until what date is the current program scheduled to run?
 - d. Will the program continue beyond that date? If not, why not?

In respect to staff issues in the Tamworth region:

142. Is it correct that as of May this year, there were 62 unattached employees in the Hunter New England Area Health Services?
143. In what locations are the sixty-two positions?
144. Are any of the sixty-two positions in the Tamworth area, and if so, how many?
145. Since March 2007 what changes in the establishment numbers (approved employment level) have occurred at Tamworth Referral Hospital?
146. What changes, if any, are there to be in the establishment numbers at Tamworth Referral Hospital during the current financial year?
147. Are the Stores at Tamworth Referral Hospital to be closed, and if so, what effect on employment at Tamworth Referral Hospital will this have?
148. Are there any other restructures to occur at Tamworth Hospital and if so, what are they?

In respect to the Tamworth Hospital Redevelopment:

149. At what stage is the Tamworth Hospital redevelopment up to?
150. Has a Health Services Plan been completed for Tamworth Hospital, if so, will you please provide it to the committee?
151. If a Health Services Plan has not been completed, why not? When will it be completed?
152. Will you give an undertaking that with the redevelopment of Tamworth Referral Hospital at least the current number of inpatient beds will be maintained?
153. What stage of the planning for the Hospital has been reached?
154. How much has so far been expended on any planning for the redevelopment?
155. What is the budget for the redevelopment for;
 - a. 2006-07
 - b. 2007-08

c. 2008-09

156. Have any physical plans for the redeveloped facilities been developed?
157. When is it anticipated that the design phase will commence and be completed?
158. When is the construction phase anticipated to commence and when will it be completed?
159. Will current facilities / services provided by the Hospital be maintained?
160. Will any additional facilities / services , such as Radiotherapy services be included in any redevelopment? If so, what additional services are to be provided? If not, why not?

In respect to Hunter New England Area Health Service air travel:

161. What is the budget, 2008-09, for air travel by management or executive personnel of Hunter New England Area Health Service?
162. How many;
 - a. Commercial
 - b. CharteredFlights were taken by Hunter New England Area Health Service managers / executives in 2007-08 which departed from Newcastle / Williamstown to attend meetings or events in the New England part of the Area?
163. What was the total cost, in 2007-08, for the above flights if any?

In respect to Tenterfield Hospital:

164. How many patients who presented at Tenterfield Hospital for emergency / accident reasons in 2007-08 were referred to Queensland hospitals for treatment?

In respect to job transfers in and out of Newcastle:

165. How many full time equivalent positions in the Hunter New England Area Health Service have been transferred from other locations within the Area to locations in Newcastle or its suburbs since the Hunter New England Area Health Service was established? Please list the positions?
 - a. How many such transfers occurred in 2007-08? Please list the affected positions.
166. How many such transfers from locations in Newcastle or its suburbs to non-Newcastle locations within the Area Health Service have occurred since the Area Health Service was established? Please list the affected positions and the locations to which they were transferred.
 - a. How many such transfers occurred in 2007-08? Please list the affected positions and the locations to which they were transferred.

Questions from Mr Cohen

167. Are there plans within the Department of Health and the Area Health Services to capture data on cost impacts of other health areas through deficiencies in PADP? - An example would be delays in discharge planning owing to a lack of equipment.
168. How can the Dept of Health effectively plan and manage health programs such as PADP if appropriate program data is not collected?
169. Will the Minister ensure that PADP funds previously spent on the Home Oxygen program in contravention of the PADP policy will be returned to the PADP ledger?
170. Approximately five years ago, NSW Health introduced a PADP Policy requiring program clients to make a \$100 co-payment each year. Can the Minister identify any other NSW Health programs that request a co-payment and explain how much the co-payment is?
171. As it is reported that 98% of PADP recipients are pensioners, and who would have some type of disability with extra 'unavoidable costs' directly associated with having a disability, does the Minister believe it is appropriate to charge the \$100 co-payment?
172. Can the Minister advise how many eligible PADP applicants are required to make the co-payment and how many eligible PADP applicants are not required to make the co-payment?
173. In relation to the Oakton audit report on the Bathurst PADP Lodgment Centre, can the Minister provide an outline of how;
- a. The provision of unreliable financial information and inaccurate financial reporting,
 - b. Non compliance with central PADP policy,
 - c. Sufficiency of record retention, and
 - d. Diversion of PADP Funding to other AHS programs
- is being addressed in light of the audit and Recommendation 16 of the PriceWaterhouse Cooper Report?
174. As NSW Public Hospitals and Public Health Services can be accessed by the general public without means testing, can the Minister please explain how the Bathurst Hospital Seating Clinic (which undertakes wheelchair seating and cushion assessments for people with a disability) is able to be funded using the PADP budget then restricts access to this essential service to only people that are eligible for PADP, and in doing so, denies access to some people with a disability from this essential regional service?
175. Can the Minister identify any circumstances where an Australian citizen with a disability can be denied access to accessing and NSW Public Health Service?