

## **MINISTER ASSISTING THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH (MENTAL HEALTH)**

### **BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING – RESPONSE TO QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE**

#### **HORNSBY MENTAL HEALTH INTENSIVE CARE UNIT**

##### **Question from the Hon Marie Ficarra MLC (Page 27)**

“The Hon. MARIE FICARRA: The total cost of the unit?

Dr MATTHEWS: Capital wise —I would have to refer that.

Mr BARKER: Operating or capital?

The Hon. MARIE FICARRA: Well, both actually.

Mr BARKER: The operating budget was \$5 million.

The Hon. MARIE FICARRA: And the recent upgrades and corrections of faults? Would you be able to provide that? I do not expect that tonight but could you provide it to us?

Mr BARKER: We can certainly provide you with the full capital cost of those, yes”.

##### **RESPONSE:**

- I am advised that the 2007/08 budget allocation for the Hornsby Mental Health Intensive Care Unit’s operation is \$4M.
- Figures available at this time indicate the final capital cost of the Unit will be \$6.55M.
- An estimated \$20,000 has been allocated to upgrade the walkway to the Unit to increase its functionality.

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#### **COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH WORKERS**

##### **Question asked by the Hon Robert Brown MLC (Page 28)**

“The Hon. ROBERT BROWN: Perhaps not. I would like to ask a question on community mental health caseworkers. I note you talked in general terms, Dr Matthews, about the difficulty of maintaining and recruiting general mental health nursing staff. How many community mental health caseworkers are currently employed? Do you measure or can you tell us what is the average case workload? Is there a high turnover of caseworkers? Is that area also stressed and suffering?

Dr MATTHEWS: There are a number of questions there.

The Hon. ROBERT BROWN: I wanted to ask them together so that you got a drift of what I was getting at.

Dr MATTHEWS: We can certainly on notice give you the exact number of clinical FTEs—full-time equivalents—in both hospital and community. As to average caseload—

The Hon. ROBERT BROWN: I guess that would be a determination of hours worked or hours paid?

Dr MATTHEWS: It does vary a lot depending on the type of work. An acute assertive follow-up person would have a much smaller caseload than someone in general intake. That does vary a lot. The third one was turnover. We keep statistics, I am sure, on retention and turnover. NAMO—Nursing and Midwifery Office—can give us that on notice.

The Hon. ROBERT BROWN: If you could provide those figures on notice to the Committee, could you also provide the corresponding figures for the last two whole periods, say, 2005 and 2006?

Dr MATTHEWS: Yes”.

**RESPONSE:**

I am advised:

(1)

Community mental health case workers are multidisciplinary health professionals. The majority are nurses but may also be social workers, psychologists or occupational therapists. In community mental health the most recent available data indicates that there are 2,589 full time equivalent staff.

(2)

Comparison and collation of data on caseloads is a complex issue. NSW Health community health information systems do not allow central calculation of average caseloads for clinical units or individual clinical staff.

The National Minimum Data Set for Mental Health Establishments does not include the concept of caseload, instead focusing on the collection of information about time involved in clinical activities. The increase in number of clients seen from 240,199 in 2002/03 to 257,985 in 2005/06 reflects the increase in community mental health staff (from 2,339 in 2002/03 to 2,589 in 2005/06).

(3) and (4)

NSW Health is not aware of any information that case workers have a particularly high turnover. The Department's Nursing and Midwifery Branch monitor vacancy rates for mental health nurses but do not differentiate between inpatient and community positions.

In July 2001 there were 131.5 full time equivalent mental health nursing Positions Actively Recruited; in July 2007 there are 109.4. This reduction in nursing vacancies has occurred during an unprecedented expansion of both inpatient and community services with accompanying demands for additional staff.

(5)

These figures are not available.

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#### **VETERANS' AFFAIRS PATIENTS AT CALLAN PARK**

##### **Question asked by the Hon Sylvia Hale MLC (Page 30)**

**“Ms SYLVIA HALE:** As you know, the proposal is to close the facilities at Callan Park and, even though there are fewer beds at Concord, to transfer the service there. But I understand veterans of World War II and the Korean War who currently reside at Callan Park will not be moved?

**Mr PAUL LYNCH:** That is my understanding, but I am happy to have that double-checked.

**Dr MATTHEWS:** That guarantee has been given on a large number of occasions”.

##### **RESPONSE:**

I am advised by the Sydney South West Area Health Service that there are four patients remaining in “H” ward at Rozelle Hospital. The advanced age of the patients is such that they are receiving nursing home care while in a psychiatric facility.

I am advised that patients will only be moved at their own, or the family's request, otherwise they will remain at “H” ward.

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### **BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING – RESPONSE TO QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE**

#### **FUNDING TO NGO'S PROVIDING MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES**

##### **Question asked by The Hon Melinda Pavey MLC (Page 37)**

**“The Hon. MELINDA PAVEY:** Perhaps Mr Brown might ask a question on that. Minister, are you able to provide a list of the non-government organisations [NGOs] funded to provide mental health services in 2006-07 and 2007-08, together with the funding allocated by the State and by the Commonwealth? You will probably need to take that question on notice.

**Mr PAUL LYNCH:** We will take that on notice. I do not know that we will be able to give you the figures for the Commonwealth but we can certainly give you the figures for the State.

**Mr BARKER:** In our annual report we actually publish the grants for NGOs given by NSW Health. If the Commonwealth gives us funding and we administer that, we are aware of that, but if they fund NGOs organisations directly, the Minister is correct, we would not be able to give you that advice. The 2007-08 grants are yet to be approved by the Minister, so they have not been determined at this point in time, but upon the Minister making a decision on all our NGOs grants, we then advise those NGOs what their approved grant is, so at that point in time we will be able to advise the Committee, but we could not take that question on notice until such time as the Minister has made that decision”.

#### **RESPONSE:**

I am advised that 2006/07 NGO grants by the Department of Health for Mental Health will be included in the 2006/07 Annual Report, which will shortly be tabled in the Parliament.

A list of the 2007/08 grants will be provided to the Committee once they have been approved by the Minister for Health.