



LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

PORTFOLIO COMMITTEES

BUDGET ESTIMATES 2021-2022 Supplementary Questions

Portfolio Committee No. 2 – Health

HEALTH AND MEDICAL RESEARCH

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Answers due by: 2 December 2021

Budget Estimates secretariat
Phone 9230 2898
BudgetEstimates@parliament.nsw.gov.au

HEALTH AND MEDICAL RESEARCH

Questions from the Hon Mark Buttigieg MLC (on behalf of the Opposition)

Ice Inquiry

1. When will you respond to the Special Commission of Inquiry into the drug ICE?
2. Why has it taken you so long to respond?

Health Staff Salary Packaging

3. In relation to the salary packaging and the 50% tax saving withheld from staff, which department retains this money?
 - (a) Is it Health or Treasury?
4. How much money was returned to the Government due to withholding the 50% in the 2020/21 year?
5. Is this policy being reviewed?

Security

6. The intention of a Code Black response is to ensure specialised assistance is available to prevent or minimise injury or other harm to staff, patients and visitors at all times. A code black response team will assist in containing the incident until external assistance arrives or they are able to resolve the incident. How many Code Black responses have occurred in NSW public hospitals this year?
7. One of the recommendations of the Anderson Review was that at the commencement of each shift, personnel should be identified who will be required to attend a Code Black if called, and their roles should also be clearly defined and understood. Does this happen?
8. Over the last 12 months how many NSW Health staff have been assaulted by patients?
9. One of the recommendations of the Anderson Review was that Police and paramedics should inform emergency department staff when bringing in patients with challenging behaviours who may pose a potential risk. To this end, the existing and all future MOUs with third party agencies should include provision for such information to be provided prior to arrival at the emergency department. Has this happened?
10. One of the recommendations of the Anderson Review was that barriers used at emergency department receptions and triage desks and other waiting rooms/reception areas that have been determined to be at risk, should be of a safety glass design that does not allow a person to climb or reach through and grab at or potentially harm staff. Has this happened?

11. As part of the Anderson Review legislative change was also recommended to:
 - insert a new ‘Part’ into the Health Services Act dealing with hospital security and safety, recognising the duties, powers, rights and responsibilities of security staff and any related matters that arise from this review that support safety in hospitals
 - ensure there are no legal barriers hampering transport of patients from one part of a hospital to another, where the hospital campus is on two sites;
 - (a) Why hasn’t this occurred?

Election commitments

12. As of 1 November 2021, how many of the 100 additional palliative care nurses that were committed at the last election have been recruited?
13. As of 1 November 2021, how many of the 8 additional children’s allergy nurses that were committed at the last election have been recruited?
14. As of 1 November 2021, how many of the 24 additional cataract surgery nurses that were committed at the last election have been recruited?
15. As of 1 November 2021, how many of the 23 additional mental health nurses that were committed at the last election have been recruited?
16. As of 1 November 2021, how many of the 8.2 additional paediatric care nurses that were committed at the last election have been recruited?

Private Health

17. Northern Beaches Hospital had 38 FTE Allied Health Professionals originally and today there are only 12. Patients are now been forced to go to other hospitals further away. Would you be prepared to look at returning the full complement of Allied Health Professionals to Northern Beaches Hospital?

Staffing in public hospitals

18. Can you provide, the FTE levels across all Local Health Districts, hospitals, departments and individual classifications for the years 2019, 2020, 2021?
19. Over the last two financial years can you advise how much money is spent on contractors to fill security related staffing positions?
20. Over the last two financial years can you advise how much money is spent on contractors to fill cleaning related staffing positions?
21. Is there a plan to reduce the number of security staff and replace them with Health and Security Assistants (HASA’s) at Liverpool Hospital?

Cost of locums

22. What is the average cost per day for Locums visiting rural NSW?
23. What is the highest rate that is currently paid for Locums visiting NSW per day?
24. What other costs are covered for Locums when they visit rural NSW? (ie accommodation, food, incidentals)
25. What is the benefit to the community to have locums rather than permanent doctors?
26. Have you had any discussions about capping the Locum rates?

Issues from the Rural Health Inquiry

27. At the Rural Health Inquiry hearing in Wellington we heard from a local Doctor, Dr Iannuzzi, who described that running out of basic medicines and equipment has become a weekly if not daily occurrence. Is that good enough?
28. Do you agree with them that this boils down to a limited Budget?
 - (a) Surely if they had their budget increased then they would be able to purchase additional stock?
29. At the same hearing we heard from two nurses, Ms Sheree Staggs and Ms Samantha Gregory-Jones, who told us they often run out of things like incontinence pads and they have to meet people from the local nursing home in the car park to borrow them. How has this been allowed to happen?
30. Are you aware that there are a number of operating theatres in Tamworth Hospital that have been used for storage?
31. Are you aware that there is an operating theatre in Leeton Hospital that is currently not able to be used due to the recovery room being a few centimetres too small?
32. Given there are tens of thousands of people on the elective surgery waiting list, surely there is a desperate need to get these theatres up and running and operating on people who are waiting in pain for things like knee or hip replacements?
33. How many hospitals in NSW have no doctor within them on a weekend?
34. Are there any hospitals in metropolitan Sydney that have no doctor in them on a weekend?
35. Can you confirm that Temora Hospital received substantial funding a few years ago to upgrade their theatres to allow obstetrics to take place but none of it happened because of a lack of nurses?

Visiting Medical Officers

36. How many VMOs (FTE and Headcount) are currently engaged across NSW Health, by LHD and by craft group/speciality?
37. How does this compare to the number of VMOS engaged across NSW health in 2016?
38. What is the number and percentage of VMOs on 'zero hours' contracts?
39. What is the number and percentage of VMO contracts that are exclusively for the provision of clinical service (i.e., they are not required to provide clinical support activities like quality assurance, teaching, policy, and procedure development)?
40. How many staff specialists are employed in NSW (FTE and Headcount, by LHD) and how does this compare to each year for the past five years?
41. How much money did NSW Health spend on VMOs in 2017/2018, 2018/2019 and 2019/20?
42. How much has been spent on VMOs so far this financial year?

Westmead Imaging Training

43. RANZCR withdrew accreditation for imaging training at Westmead. A part of the issue is that the staff specialists' award does not adequately enable recruitment of imaging doctors due to competition with the private sector, so Westmead was unable to attract enough specialists, resulting in inadequate training, which the college drew attention to.
 - (a) What does the government intend to do to address this?

Workforce/Staffing

44. In 2019, the NSW government committed to employing an additional 5,000 nurses and midwives into the Public Health System.
 - (a) What was the headcount then (Feb 2019) and what is the headcount now?
 - (b) What is the status of this election promise?
 - (c) How many nurses and midwives have been recruited, per Local Health District (LHD) breakdown?
45. What are the current FTE vacancies, per LHD breakdown, for the following speciality areas across NSW Health run facilities:
 - (a) Emergency Departments?
 - (b) ICU?
 - (c) Operating Theatres?

- (d) Mental Health?
- (e) Maternity?

Maternity Services

46. According to BHI data, 19,113 babies were born in NSW public hospitals during the April to June quarter, a 9 per cent spike compared to the same period last year. Data shows the highest birth figures were concentrated in Sydney's south-west.
- (a) How many midwives have been recruited in SWS LHD during 2021?
 - (b) How many FTE midwifery vacancies (all classifications) are there currently in SWS LHD?
 - (c) How many FTE midwifery vacancies (all classifications) are there currently in WS LHD?
 - (d) How many FTE midwifery vacancies (all classifications) are there currently in NBM LHD?
 - (e) How many FTE midwifery vacancies (all classifications) are there currently in IS LHD?
 - (f) Despite widespread FTE vacancies in maternity services across NSW Health facilities, why is there a lack of midwifery positions currently advertised state-wide?
 - (g) Have midwifery-led postnatal home visits resumed across Greater Sydney?
 - i. If not, when will they resume?
 - (h) Will obstetrics and full maternity services resume at Parkes Hospital?
 - i. If so, when?
 - (i) Only antenatal and postnatal services are available to mothers in Parkes, does WNSW LHD intend on increasing the Midwifery Group Practice model of care?
 - (j) How many midwives are currently operating the MGP service to Parkes?
 - (k) How many midwives resigned from WNSW LHD in 2020?
 - (l) How many midwives resigned from WNSW LHD to date in 2021?

Regional hospitals and Multi-Purpose Services

47. What incentives is NSW Health currently offering to attract nursing and midwifery staff to rural, regional and remote hospitals, health services and MPSs?
48. What recruitment strategies is NSW Health and/or LHDs utilising to attract new staff to available positions?
49. How many FTE nursing and midwifery vacancies currently exist across the 7x regional LHDs?

- (a) What is the breakdown of these vacancies, per classification?
- 50. How many regionally based NSW Health nurses have First Line Emergency Care training qualifications?
- 51. The NSW Government recently announced \$35m for a Regional Housing Package for health accommodation close to health facilities:
 - (a) Will this accommodation be utilised by visiting medical officers and locums?
 - (b) Will agency/short-term contract nursing and midwifery staff have access to this accommodation?

Vaccination hubs

- 52. What is the vaccination rate in the 2142 postcode area as at 9 November of:
 - (a) Over-16s?
 - (b) Over-12s?
- 53. The Mayor of Cumberland LGA tweeted “launching NSW new vaccination hub at The Granville Centre Granville.... Cumberland City Council donated the centre free of charge.” Is this correct?
- 54. Is Western Sydney Local Health District aware that 161 community organisations and individuals had their bookings cancelled at the Granville Centre to accommodate the vaccination hub?
- 55. What vaccination targets have been set for the number of vaccinations to be conducted at the Granville Centre?

Canterbury Hospital

- 56. In your letter to Sophie Cotsis MP, you advised that the NSW Ministry of Health has allocated planning funds to facilitate the update of the Canterbury Clinical Services Plan.
 - (a) How much funding is planned?
 - (b) How much of these funds will be allocated to Canterbury Hospital specifically?
 - (c) How much of this funding will be allocated to Canterbury Hospital in 2022?
 - i. What resources and infrastructure will this fund for Canterbury Hospital?
- 57. In the period of June 2020- June 2021, how many new beds were allocated to Canterbury Hospital?
- 58. In the period of June 2021- October 2021, how many new beds were allocated to Canterbury Hospital?

59. From November 2021- November 2022, how many new beds are planned to be allocated for Canterbury Hospital?
60. In the period of June 2020- June 2021, how much funding was allocated for palliative care at Canterbury Hospital?
61. In the period of June 2021- October 2021, how much funding was allocated for palliative care at Canterbury Hospital?
62. From November 2021- November 2022, how much funding is planned to be allocated for palliative care at Canterbury Hospital?
63. In the period of June 2020- June 2021, how many renal dialysers were available for use at Canterbury Hospital?
 - (a) How many angiograms?
 - (b) How many MRI scanners?
64. In the period of June 2021- October 2021, how many renal dialysers were available for use at Canterbury Hospital?
 - (a) How many angiograms?
 - (b) How many MRI scanners?
65. From November 2021- November 2022, how many renal dialysers will be available for use at to Canterbury Hospital?
 - (a) How many angiograms?
 - (b) How many MRI scanners?
66. During the period of 26 June and 10 October 2021, what support services were made available for transfer patients?
67. During the period of 26 June to 10 October 2021, what was the average waiting time for emergency patients at Canterbury Hospital?
 - (a) What was the average waiting time for emergency patients from June 2020- June 2021?
 - (b) What was the average waiting time for emergency patients from October- November 2021?
68. During the period of 26 June to 10 October 2021, what was the average waiting time for non-emergency patients at Canterbury Hospital?
 - (a) What was the average waiting time for non-emergency patients from June 2020- June 2021?
 - (b) What was the average waiting time for non-emergency patients from October- November 2021?

69. During the period of 26 June to 10 October 2021, what was the average waiting time for outpatients at Canterbury Hospital?
- (a) What was the average waiting time for outpatients from June 2020-June 2021?
 - (b) What was the average waiting time for outpatients from October- November 2021?

Questions from Ms Cate Faehrmann MLC

Emergency Surgery

70. Was there an increase in emergency surgery in public hospitals in 2021 compared to 2019?
- (a) If so what percentage increase was there between
 - i. Quarter 1 2019 and 2021?
 - ii. Quarter 2 2019 and 2021?

Leeton hospital questions

71. Why has the Leeton Hospital's operating theatre not been used for the past five years?
72. The phrase "Leeton District Hospital" has been deleted from the Murrumbidgee Local Health Service website. It's now called the Leeton Health Service. What is the reason for this change?
73. Can NSW Health guarantee that Leeton Hospital will continue to provide emergency care from doctors?

Griffith hospital

74. Does the Griffith Base Hospital currently have an orthopaedics service?
- (a) If not, for how long has it been without this service?
75. Will the new Griffith Base Hospital employ full-time, permanent onsite orthopaedic surgeons?
- (a) How many?

Ambulances and wait-times in border areas

76. What proportion of ambulances attending cases in Moama are Victorian?
- (a) What proportion are from NSW?
77. Which hospital is the primary destination for ambulances attending patients in Moama?

78. What is the average wait time for an ambulance in Moama?
79. How are ambulance services funded for border residents?
 - (a) Do they require two memberships?
80. What is the funding arrangement for NSW public patients who travel into Victoria?
 - (a) How much does it cost the NSW taxpayer per year?
81. Is there an MOU between the NSW and Victorian Government on NSW residents accessing Victorian health care?
 - (a) If there is can you table it?
82. How much money does NSW pay to Victoria each year for healthcare services?