



LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

PORTFOLIO COMMITTEES

BUDGET ESTIMATES 2021-2022 Supplementary Questions

Portfolio Committee No. 2 – Health

MENTAL HEALTH, REGIONAL YOUTH AND WOMEN

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MENTAL HEALTH, REGIONAL YOUTH, AND WOMEN

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

Advocate for Children and Young People Act 2014

1. How many draft reports were furnished to the Minister under s34 of the Act in each of the past 5 years? (ACYP)

Under Section 34 of the *Advocate for Children and Young People Act 2014*, the following reports have been furnished to the Minister for Regional Youth:

- Annual Report 2019/2020
- Review of the NSW Strategic Plan for Children and Young People 2016-2019
- Annual Report 2020/2021

2. How many special reports were requested by the Minister under s33 of the Act in each of the past 5 years? (ACYP)

None.

Minister for Regional Youth (MO)

3. What purpose do you see for your role as Minister for Regional Youth, given the only Legislative oversight in the portfolio is joint administration of the Advocate for Children and Young People Act 2014 with the Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services?

The NSW Government has made significant investment in the regions, and critical to realising the ambitions for regional NSW is a skilled, healthy, connected and empowered regional youth. The Office for Regional Youth provides a coordinated and strategic approach to supporting regional youth. The Office for Regional Youth advocates, supports, develops and funds programs that improve the outcomes of regional young people across NSW, focussed on the four pillars of the Regional Youth Framework:

- Work Ready,
- Wellbeing,
- Connectivity, and
- Community.

4. What concrete achievements have you made in the role?

All election commitments made in relation to this portfolio have been met. The NSW Government has also delivered support and assistance to regional youth including through the following investments and programs:

- \$61 million for youth projects through the Bushfire Local Economic Recovery package.
- \$54.4 million for youth projects through the Stronger Country Community Fund Round 3.
- \$20.3 million for the Regional Youth Community Coordinators and the Children and Young People Wellbeing Program.
- \$10m of Holiday Break funding through the NSW Economic Recovery Program.

In addition to these achievements, the NSW Government has supported projects, pilots and grants directly aligned to the Regional Youth Framework Pillars, including:

- Regional Gap Year Campaign - responding to the impacts of COVID-19 on travel, worker shortages across regional NSW and youth unemployment.
- Maayuma-Li Gem at Lightning Ridge with PCYC, Mining Exploration & Geoscience and Aboriginal Housing Office.
- Birrany and Malungan Program at Dubbo Zoo.
- Physical Activity Program with the Office of Sport in Eurobodalla, Kempsey, and Bathurst.
- Independent Youth Action Meetings (YAMs) facilitator in Coffs Harbour.

5. How many policy proposals for the Regional Youth portfolio have been developed as policy since you assumed the role?

The NSW Government has adopted and developed all viable policy proposals that align with the Regional Youth Framework.

Youth employment

6. What plans, if any, are there to bolster funding and investing in career guidance programs at schools to equip young people with an understanding of work opportunities?

The NSW Government has an Action Plan to implement goals outlined in the NSW Regional Youth Framework so that initiatives have specific and tangible outcomes. This can be found at regional.nsw.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0005/1244345/NSW-Regional-Youth-Action-Plan.pdf

7. What support is provided by the Office of Regional Youth to ensure young people are aware of their rights at work and know what to do if they are underpaid or maltreated at work?

This is the responsibility of the Fair Work Commission and the Fair Work Ombudsman.

8. What plans, if any, are there to combat regional youth unemployment?

The NSW Government has an Action Plan to implement goals outlined in the NSW Regional Youth Framework so that initiatives have specific and tangible outcomes. This can be found at regional.nsw.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0005/1244345/NSW-Regional-Youth-Action-Plan.pdf

The Office for Regional Youth also works with government and non-government agencies to ensure referral pathways from education to work are clear, and youth who are at risk of being disengaged with education are upskilled to enter the workforce.

Both the Federal Government and the NSW Government has delivered billions in economic stimulus designed to alleviate youth unemployment.

9. What plans, if any, are to there to combat insecure work insofar as regional young people are concerned?

The NSW Government has an Action Plan to implement goals outlined in the NSW Regional Youth Framework so that initiatives have specific and tangible outcomes. This can be found at regional.nsw.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0005/1244345/NSW-Regional-Youth-Action-Plan.pdf

The Office for Regional Youth also works with government and non-government agencies to facilitate opportunities for regional young people to have clear pathways to skills, education and employment.

10. What targets have been set in any Office of Regional Youth document to reduce regional youth unemployment?

The NSW Regional Youth Framework and action plan can be found online at https://www.regional.nsw.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/1243912/NSW-Regional-Youth-Framework.pdf

11. What funds have been allocated within the Regional Youth portfolio to achieve the targets referred to in (10)?

Refer to the answer provided to question 10.

“Youth intergovernmental group”

12. In relation to the youth intergovernmental group referred to by Ms Ryan (Hansard, page 35), who are the group’s members?

The NSW Regional Youth Steering Committee is comprised of representatives from NSW Aboriginal Affairs, Advocate for Children & Young People, Department of Communities and

Justice, Department of Customer Service, Department of Premier and Cabinet, Office of Sport, Department of Education, Multicultural NSW, NSW Children's Guardian, NSW Health, NSW Police Force, Department of Regional NSW, Resilience NSW, Training Services NSW, Transport for NSW and Treasury.

13. What are the standing agenda items of the intergovernmental group?

Standing agenda items for the Regional Youth Steering Committee include Presentations from partner agencies, Regional Youth Portfolio Updates and Agency Updates.

14. What has been discussed at the intergovernmental group at its last six meetings?

The intergovernmental group discusses a range of issues, programs and policies that affect young people in regional NSW.

15. Given that the Department of Education engages with young people through public schools and high schools, do they send a representative to the intergovernmental group?

Yes.

16. Did the Department of Education ever indicate at the intergovernmental group their proposed changes to funding arrangements for student engagement?

No.

Youth opportunities grants

17. What actions were taken by the Office of Regional Youth to promote the grants in 2020 and 2021?

Youth Opportunities is a grants program administered by the Department of Communities and Justice. The Office for Regional Youth promoted the Youth Opportunities grants to the Regional Youth Taskforce, through the Department of Regional NSW Regional Youth Network and through the NSW Regional Youth Steering Committee.

18. What advocacy did the Office of Regional Youth provide to DCJ on which applications should be successful in 2020 and 2021?

Youth Opportunities is a grants program administered by the Department of Communities and Justice.

19. Was the Office's advocacy accepted by DCJ?

Youth Opportunities is a grants program administered by the Department of Communities and Justice.

20. If a “regional lens” were applied to applications, what would this mean for the assessment of applications?

This question should be referred to the Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services who has oversight of this grants program.

Stronger Country Communities Fund grants

21. Of the \$100 million grants in round 1 please list the total allocated for youth-related grants by LGA?

The details of all projects funded through the Stronger Country Communities Fund and their LGAs can be found at <https://www.nsw.gov.au/regional-growth-fund/stronger-country-communities-fund#toc-stronger-country-communities-fund-approved-projects--rounds-one-two-and-three>.

22. Of the \$200 million grants in round 2 please list the total allocated for youth-related grants by LGA?

The details of all projects funded through the Stronger Country Communities Fund and their LGAs can be found at <https://www.nsw.gov.au/regional-growth-fund/stronger-country-communities-fund#toc-stronger-country-communities-fund-approved-projects--rounds-one-two-and-three>.

23. Of the \$100 million grants in round 3 please list the total allocated for youth-related grants by LGA?

The details of all projects funded through the Stronger Country Communities Fund and their LGAs can be found at <https://www.nsw.gov.au/regional-growth-fund/stronger-country-communities-fund#toc-stronger-country-communities-fund-approved-projects--rounds-one-two-and-three>.

24. Please list the 290 successful projects specifically targeted at regional youth?

The details of all projects funded through the Stronger Country Communities Fund and their LGAs can be found at <https://www.nsw.gov.au/regional-growth-fund/stronger-country-communities-fund#toc-stronger-country-communities-fund-approved-projects--rounds-one-two-and-three>.

25. Which agency prepared the approval briefs for the three rounds?

Department of Premier and Cabinet prepared the approval briefs for Rounds 1 and 2 and the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment prepared the approval briefs for Round 3.

26. Which minister/s approved the briefs for the three rounds?

Round 1 was approved by the Deputy Premier. Round 2 was approved by the Deputy Premier in consultation with the Minister for Sport. Round 3 was approved by the Deputy Premier in consultation with the Minister for Regional Youth.

Regional youth coordinators

27. How many regional youth coordinators have been appointed?

As of 24 November 2021, four Youth Community Coordinators have been appointed.

28. Does the Regional Youth portfolio fund those positions?

Yes.

(a) If not, which agency funds that expenditure?

Not applicable.

29. In which town is each coordinator based?

Youth Community Coordinators will be employed across NSW:

North Coast (Grafton office)

Mid North Coast (office to be confirmed)

Hunter/Central Coast (Office to be confirmed)

Illawarra/Shoalhaven (Nowra office)

South East/Monaro (Batemans Bay office)

Riverina/Murray (office to be confirmed)

Far West (office to be confirmed)

North West/New England (office to be confirmed)

Central West (Dubbo office)

30. Which region/s does each coordinator cover?

See above.

31. How many coordinator positions are currently vacant?

Five. As this is a newly-announced program, recruitment is currently underway.

Regional youth framework

32. The ministerial foreword to the Regional NSW Youth Framework indicates there are “serious challenges such as drought and bushfires, unemployment, mental health concerns and isolation.” What opportunities has the Office of Regional Youth helped to create in those fields?

Refer to the answer provided in response to Question 4.

33. What are the achievements of the Office of Regional Youth in the North Coast region?

Four young people from the North Coast region have served on the NSW Regional Youth Taskforce. The Office for Regional Youth has funded rounds of Holiday Break programs across the North Coast region.

An independent facilitator to run the Coffs Harbour Youth Action Meetings Project was funded as a pilot by the Office for Regional Youth. The Active Youth project is a partnership with the Office of Sport that has been funded to be delivered in the North Coast region. SCCF Youth projects have been funded and delivered in each local government area of the North Coast region (refer to question 23).

The Bushfire Local Economic Recovery fund supports youth projects in a number of local government areas of the North Coast region. The Office for Regional Youth Children and Young People Wellbeing Recovery Program, which opens in 2022, will fund community wellbeing initiatives for children and young people in the North Coast region to be delivered cooperatively through a range of organisations.

34. What are the achievements of the Office of Regional Youth in the New England North West region?

Four young people from the New England North West region have served on the NSW Regional Youth Taskforce. The Office for Regional Youth has funded rounds of the Holiday Break program across the New England North West region.

SCCF Youth projects have been funded and delivered in each local government area of the New England North West region (refer to question 23).

The Bushfire Local Economic Recovery fund supports youth projects in a number of local government areas of the New England North West region. The Office for Regional Youth Children and Young People Wellbeing Recovery Program, which opens in 2022, will fund community wellbeing initiatives for children and young people in the New England North West region to be delivered cooperatively through a range of organisations.

35. What are the achievements of the Office of Regional Youth in the Hunter region?

Four young people from the Hunter region have served on the NSW Regional Youth Taskforce. The Office for Regional Youth has funded rounds of the Holiday Break program across the Hunter region.

SCCF Youth projects have been funded and delivered in each local government area of the Hunter region (refer to question 23). The Bushfire Local Economic Recovery fund supports youth projects in a number of local government areas of the Hunter region. The Office for Regional Youth Children and Young People Wellbeing Recovery Program, which opens in 2022, will fund community wellbeing initiatives for children and young people in the Hunter region to be delivered cooperatively through a range of organisations.

36. What are the achievements of the Office of Regional Youth in the Far West region?

Four young people from the Far West region have served on the NSW Regional Youth Taskforce. The Office for Regional Youth has funded rounds of the Holiday Break program across the Far West region.

The Birrany and Malungan Pilot Program at Dubbo Zoo was funded by the Office for Regional Youth. SCCF Youth projects have been funded and delivered in each local government area of the Far West region (refer to question 23). The Office for Regional Youth Children and Young People Wellbeing Recovery Program, which opens in 2022, will fund community wellbeing initiatives for children and young people in the Far West region to be delivered cooperatively through a range of organisations.

37. What are the achievements of the Office of Regional Youth in the Central West and Orana region?

Four young people from the Central West and Orana region have served on the NSW Regional Youth Taskforce. The Office for Regional Youth has funded rounds of the Holiday Break program across the Central West and Orana region.

The Active Youth project, which is a partnership with the Office of Sport, has been funded to be delivered in the Central West and Orana region. The Office for Regional Youth funded the Maayuma-Li GEM pilot project in Lightning Ridge in partnership with the Aboriginal Housing Office and the PCYC. SCCF Youth projects have been funded and delivered in each local government area of the Central West and Orana region (refer to question 23).

The Bushfire Local Economic Recovery fund supports youth projects in Lithgow local government area in the Central West and Orana region. The Office for Regional Youth Children and Young People Wellbeing Recovery Program, which opens in 2022, will fund community

wellbeing initiatives for children and young people in the Central West and Orana region to be delivered cooperatively through a range of organisations.

38. What are the achievements of the Office of Regional Youth in the Central Coast region?

Four young people from the Central Coast region have served on the NSW Regional Youth Taskforce. The Office for Regional Youth will fund the Holiday Break program in the Central Coast region. SCCF Youth projects have been funded and delivered in the Central Coast region (refer to question 23).

The Bushfire Local Economic Recovery also funded youth projects in the Central Coast region. The Office for Regional Youth Children and Young People Wellbeing Recovery Program, which opens in 2022, will fund community wellbeing initiatives for children and young people in the Central West region to be delivered cooperatively through a range of organisations.

39. What are the achievements of the Office of Regional Youth in the Illawarra Shoalhaven region?

Four young people from the Illawarra Shoalhaven region have served on the NSW Regional Youth Taskforce. The Office for Regional Youth has funded rounds of the Holiday Break program across the Illawarra Shoalhaven region.

SCCF Youth projects have been funded and delivered in each local government area of the Illawarra Shoalhaven region (refer to question 23). The Bushfire Local Economic Recovery fund supports youth projects in various local government areas of the Illawarra Shoalhaven region. The Office for Regional Youth Children and Young People Wellbeing Recovery Program, which opens in 2022, will fund community wellbeing initiatives for children and young people in the Illawarra Shoalhaven region to be delivered cooperatively through a range of organisations.

40. What are the achievements of the Office of Regional Youth in the South East and Tablelands region?

Four young people from the South East and Tablelands region have served on the NSW Regional Youth Taskforce. The Office for Regional Youth has funded rounds of the Holiday Break program across the South East and Tablelands region.

The Active Youth project has been funded to be delivered in the South East and Tablelands and Orana region, in partnership with the Office of Sport. SCCF Youth projects have been funded and delivered in each local government area of the South East and Tablelands region (refer to question 23). The Bushfire Local Economic Recovery fund supports youth projects in various local government areas of the South East and Tablelands region. The Office for Regional Youth Children and Young People Wellbeing Recovery Program, which opens in 2022, will fund

community wellbeing initiatives for children and young people in the South East and Tablelands region to be delivered cooperatively through a range of organisations.

41. What are the achievements of the Office of Regional Youth in the Riverina Murray region?

Four young people from the Riverina Murray region have served on the NSW Regional Youth Taskforce. The Office for Regional Youth has funded rounds of the Holiday Break program across the Riverina Murray region. SCCF Youth projects have been funded and delivered in each local government area of the Riverina Murray region (refer to question 23).

The Bushfire Local Economic Recovery fund supports youth projects in a number of local government areas of the Riverina Murray region. The Office for Regional Youth Children and Young People Wellbeing Recovery Program, which opens in 2022, will fund community wellbeing initiatives for children and young people in the Riverina Murray region to be delivered cooperatively through a range of organisations.

42. In relation to the \$1.7 billion committed to grow local economies outside of Sydney, Newcastle and Wollongong through the Regional Growth Fund (Hansard, page 9) how much funding has been allocated to date?

- (a) How much of the \$1.7 billion is allocated to each region?

The details of all projects funded through the Regional Growth Fund and their LGAs can be found at <https://www.nsw.gov.au/regional-growth-fund>.

- (b) What role does the Minister for Regional Youth have in approving the grants?

The Minister for Regional Youth was consulted in the approval of youth-related grants under SCCF Round 3.

43. In relation to the Work Ready pillar, how many young people has the Office of Regional youth prepared for regional jobs of the future?

The Office of Regional Youth does not survey every young person in regional NSW and therefore can only speak to the collective benefits of this

pillar

44. In relation to the Wellbeing pillar, how many young people's mental and physical health has the actions and programs of the Office of Regional Youth boosted?

The Office of Regional Youth does not survey every young person in regional NSW and therefore can only speak to the collective benefits of this pillar.

45. In relation to the Connectivity pillar, how many young people's transport connectivity to training, work, services and recreational activities have been boosted by the actions and programs of the Office of Regional Youth?

The Office of Regional Youth does not survey every young person in regional NSW and therefore can only speak to the collective benefits of this pillar.

46. In relation to the Connectivity pillar, how many young people's digital connectivity to training, work, services and recreational activities have been boosted by the actions and programs of the Office of Regional Youth?

The Office of Regional Youth does not survey every young person in regional NSW and therefore can only speak to the collective benefits of this pillar.

47. In relation to the Community pillar, how many young people have explored their creativity, collaborated with others in teams, developed a sense of achievement or feel socially and culturally connected to and included in their communities and environment due to the actions and programs of the Office of Regional Youth?

The Office of Regional Youth does not survey every young person in regional NSW and therefore can only speak to the collective benefits of this pillar.

48. What programs have been developed by the Office of Regional Youth specifically for the Hunter area?

The Office for Regional Youth works with government and other partners to provide support, fund and advocate for existing programs and develop pilot initiatives which will be evaluated for potential expansion.

SCCF Youth projects have been funded and delivered in each local government area of the Hunter region (refer to question 23).

49. What programs have been developed by the Office of Regional Youth specifically for the Central Coast region?

The Office for Regional Youth works with government and other partners to provide support, fund and advocate for existing programs and develop pilot initiatives which will be evaluated for potential expansion.

SCCF Youth projects have been funded and delivered in the Central Coast region (refer to question 23).

50. What programs have been developed by the Office of Regional Youth specifically for the Illawarra area?

The Office for Regional Youth works with government and other partners to provide support, fund and advocate for existing programs and develop pilot initiatives which will be evaluated for potential expansion.

SCCF Youth projects have been funded and delivered in each local government area of the Illawarra region (refer to question 23).

51. What programs have been developed by the Office of Regional Youth specifically for the North Coast region?

The Office for Regional Youth works with government and other partners to provide support, fund and advocate for existing programs and develop pilot initiatives which will be evaluated for potential expansion.

SCCF Youth projects have been funded and delivered in each local government area of the North Coast region (refer to question 23).

52. What programs have been developed by the Office of Regional Youth specifically for the Monaro area?

The Office for Regional Youth works with government and other partners to provide support, fund and advocate for existing programs and develop pilot initiatives which will be evaluated for potential expansion.

SCCF Youth projects have been funded and delivered in each local government area of the Monaro region (refer to question 23).

Federal Minister for Youth (MO)

53. How often have you met with the Hon Alan Tudge MP, Minister for Education and Youth about the needs of regional youth in NSW?

Ministerial diary disclosures are publicly available on the NSW Government website.

54. How often have you met with the Hon Luke Howarth MP, Assistant Minister for Youth and Employment Services about the needs of regional youth in NSW?

Ministerial diary disclosures are publicly available on the NSW Government website.

55. What priorities have you advised Federal Ministers about in relation to the needs of regional youth in NSW?

The Regional Youth Framework and Action Plan was shared with the Federal Government outlining priorities for regional youth.

56. What funding have you secured from the Commonwealth to support the needs of regional youth in NSW?

\$6.6 million has been secured from the Commonwealth Government under the joint Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangement to implement the Youth Community Coordinator and Children and Young People Wellbeing Initiative in storm and flood impacted LGAs across Regional NSW. These initiatives commenced in November 2021 and will end 30 June 2023.

57. Have you suggested to Federal Ministers that a ministerial council on youth affairs would be an appropriate means for the states and territories to seek enhanced financial support for regional youth following the COVID-19 pandemic?

The NSW Government communicates with the Federal Government through both informal and formal settings.

Regional youth action plan priorities

58. How many young people leaving Out of Home Care at risk of experiencing homelessness have been provided a combination of personal advice, education, employment mentoring, transitional support and accommodation through the Premiers Youth Initiative (Plan, page 4)?

This question falls within the portfolio of the Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services.

59. What initiatives targeted at young people with a disability have been strengthened (Plan, page 7)?

This question falls within the portfolio of the Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services.

60. What flexible support has been provided to children, young people, families and communities, experiencing or at risk of vulnerability (Plan, Page 9)?

This question falls within the portfolio of the Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services.

Regional youth action plan

61. Since the release of the plan, what funds have been allocated to benefit regional youth in the following initiatives:

- (a) Arts and cultural funding program: project grants

This question falls within the portfolio of the Minister for the Arts.

(b) Communities and justice scholarship program

This question falls within the portfolio of the Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services.

(c) Homeless youth assistance program

This question falls within the portfolio of the Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services.

(d) Out of home care pathways scholarship

This question falls within the portfolio of the Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services.

(e) Premiers youth initiative

This question falls within the portfolio of the Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services.

(f) Rent choice youth

This question falls within the portfolio of the Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services.

(g) Teenage education payment

This question falls within the portfolio of the Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services.

(h) Youth on track

This question falls within the portfolio of the Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services.

(i) Educational pathways pilot

This question falls within the portfolio of the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning.

(j) Work experience program

This question falls within the portfolio of the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning.

(k) Workplace learning initiative

This question falls within the portfolio of the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning.

(l) Apprenticeships and traineeships

This question falls within the portfolio of the Minister for Skills and Tertiary Education.

(m) Opportunity hubs

This question falls within the portfolio of the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs.

(n) Regional industry education partnership

This question falls within the portfolio of the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning.

(o) Regional VET pathways

This question falls within the portfolio of the Minister for Skills and Tertiary Education.

(p) The Way Ahead - Apprenticeships and Traineeships for Aboriginal People

This question falls within the portfolio of the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning.

(q) School student transport scheme and School drive subsidy

This question falls within the portfolio of the Minister for Transport and Roads.

(r) Premier's priority to deliver a world class public service.

This question falls within the portfolio of the Premier.

62. Since the release of the plan, what funds have been allocated to benefit regional youth in the following wellbeing initiatives:

(a) Creative Kids program

This question falls within the portfolio of the Minister for the Arts.

(b) Coonamble integrated service delivery project

This question falls within the portfolio for the Minister for Health and Medical Research.

(c) Out of home care joint protocol

This question falls within the portfolio of the Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services.

(d) Residential rehab for young people

This question falls within the portfolio for the Minister for Health and Medical Research.

(e) Targeted earlier intervention program

This question falls within the portfolio for the Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services.

- (f) The bail assistance line

This question falls within the portfolio for the Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services.

- (g) Youth frontiers

This question falls within the portfolio for the Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services.

- (h) Wellbeing health in-reach nurse (WHIN) program

Information on this program can be found in the NSW Budget Papers.

- (i) Youth action meetings

Information on this program can be found in the NSW Budget Papers.

- (j) Active Kids

This question falls within the portfolio for the Minister for Sport

- (k) Active Kids pilot programs in the Shoalhaven

This question falls within the portfolio for the Minister for Sport, Multiculturalism, Seniors and Veterans.

- (l) Active Kids pilot programs in the south east and tablelands regions of NSW

This question falls within the portfolio for the Minister for Sport, Multiculturalism, Seniors and Veterans.

- (m) Mental Health first aid

Information on funding for mental health first aid training can be found in media releases issued on the NSW Health website <https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/news/Pages/2021-minister-for-mental-health.aspx>.

63. Since the release of the plan, what funds have been allocated to benefit regional youth in the following community initiatives:

- (a) Child rights training

This question falls within the portfolio for the Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services.

- (b) Arts and cultural funding program: organisation grants

This question falls within the portfolio of the Minister for the Arts.

- (c) NSW Youth Opportunities program

This question falls within the portfolio for the Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services.

- (d) NSW Youth Week

This question falls within the portfolio for the Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services.

- (e) Universal screening and supports in high schools

This question falls within the portfolio for the Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services.

- (f) COMPACT program

This question falls within the portfolio for the Minister for Sport, Multiculturalism, Seniors and Veterans.

- (g) Guided tour program

This question falls within the portfolio of the Minister for Energy and Environment.

- (h) Child Safe Support workshops

This question falls within the portfolio of the Minister for Sport, Multiculturalism, Seniors and Veterans.

- (i) Duke of Edinburgh International Awards

This question falls within the portfolio of the Minister for Sport, Multiculturalism, Seniors and Veterans.

- (j) Regional Academies of Sport

This question falls within the portfolio of the Minister for Sport, Multiculturalism, Seniors and Veterans.

- (k) Respite and support service

This question falls within the portfolio of the Minister for Sport, Multiculturalism, Seniors and Veterans.

64. Since the release of the plan, what funds have been allocated to benefit regional youth in the following connectivity initiatives:

(a) Our local

This question falls within the portfolio for the Minister for Customer Service. Public transport network service improvement program

This question falls within the portfolio for the Minister for Transport and Roads.

Next Women's Strategy

65. Consultation processes will be undertaken with the interdepartmental committee and external stakeholders ahead of the development of the Women's Strategy to take effect after 2022.

(a) Noting that internal work has commenced on the consultation process, which external stakeholders will be consulted?

(b) What form will this consultation take?

(c) Noting the intention to invite community feedback on the next Women's Strategy through a "Have your say" public consultation process:

i. What form will these consultations take?

ii. Will the Government publish any written submissions collected during this consultation process?

iii. Will the Government publish quantitative data collected during this consultation process?

ANSWER

65. I am advised:

(a) In the development of next NSW Women's Strategy, extensive consultation will occur across government with relevant portfolio agencies, including members of the NSW Women's Strategy Interdepartmental Committee (IDC), and non-government stakeholders, in 2022.

(d) Consultation will be conducted through workshops with key stakeholders and public consultation via the NSW Government's Have Your Say website. Written submissions will be collected during the consultation process.

(e) i. As above and <https://www.nsw.gov.au/have-your-say>.

- (f) ii. & iii. Yes, the data collected through the consultations will be published in a key findings report, which will inform development of the strategy.

Return to Work Program

66. The Return to Work Program was announced in the 2020-21 NSW Budget, offering grants of up to \$5000 to assist women in returning to the workplace.
- (a) Has a review of the effectiveness of this program been undertaken?
- i. Against what criteria is the effectiveness of the program been measured?
- ii. How many women have successfully secured employment as a result of this program?
- (b) How many applications for this program have been made since its commencement?
- i. How many grants have been delivered to successful applicants?
- (c) As at 6 April 2021, \$1.8 million in grants had been paid to successful applicants, with an average of \$4,979 approved per successful applicant.
- i. As of 10 November 2021, how much has been paid out to successful applicants?
- ii. What is the average dollar amount supplied to successful applicants?
67. Noting the further impact of COVID-19 on NSW over second half of 2021 will the Return to Work program be extended?
- (a) Will the Return to Work program be expanded in terms of funding?

ANSWER

66. I am advised:

- (a) Return to Work Coordinators conducted reviews three and six months after recipients received a Return to Work Grant. The timely approval and payment of grants is also monitored and reviewed regularly.
- (i) The effectiveness of the Return to Work Program for recipients is being measured against the following criteria:
- recipients' confidence to gain and maintain employment;
 - recipients' satisfaction regarding the Return to Work Program.
- (ii) Information on employment outcomes will be collected through the six month survey of Return to Work Grant recipients. Of 830 recipients who completed a

three months survey: 618 (75%) stated that they are confident they will gain employment; and 812 (98%) found the Return to Work Coordinator process useful.

(b) As at 15 November 2021, 2,227 women booked appointments with Return to Work Coordinators. 1,588 applications have been received. 1,417 grants have been paid.

(i) As at 10 November 2021, \$6.19 million in grants have been paid to 1,417 women.

(ii) The average dollar amount paid to successful applicants is \$4,396.9.

67. I am advised:

(a) The NSW Government provided \$10 million as part of the 2020-21 NSW Budget for the Return to Work Program and continues to rollout grants in 2021-22.

Trade Skills Pathways Centre

68. The Trades Skills Pathways Centre was funded in order to address trades shortages in NSW in part by encouraging and supporting women to pursue careers in the trades.

(a) Has a review of the effectiveness of this program been undertaken?

i. Against what criteria is the effectiveness of the program been measured?

(b) How many women have been assisted through this program?

(c) Does the Government keep track of future career development and experience?

i. If so, what information collected?

ii. How is this information collected?

ANSWER

68. This is a matter for the Minister for Skills and Tertiary Education.

Reproductive health care

69. Reproductive health is considered essential to the empowerment of women by international authorities. The World Health Organisation states that reproductive health includes ensuring that individuals “have the capability to reproduce and the freedom to decide if, when and how often to do so.”

(a) Noting the closure of clinics providing reproductive health services in Regional NSW, such as the Marie Stopes Clinic in Broadmeadow, what steps is the Minister taking to ensure that all women in NSW have access to adequate reproductive health care?

- i. Noting public statements from Marie Stopes that the closure of the clinic was related in part to the regulatory environment in NSW, what steps has the Minister taken to address these concerns?

ANSWER

69. NSW Health does not regulate private abortion clinics in NSW. Affordable and timely access to abortion is a whole of sector response shared by the public health system, private providers, primary care and accredited non-government organisations.

Marie Stopes Australia is a non-profit organisation that provides family planning services throughout Australia. Alternative reproductive services remain available in the Newcastle area after the closure of the Newcastle Marie Stopes clinic in July 2021.

NSW Health has introduced initiatives to improve equitable access to information and services for abortion and contraception. In early 2021, Family Planning NSW was the successful tenderer to trial a new service model to support the delivery of community-based abortion services (medical and surgical) and long acting reversible contraception for marginalised women in regional NSW. This trial commenced in mid-2021 with the first pilot site located in Newcastle.

NSW Health also provides a statewide Helpline to assist women to access services. The NSW Health funded NSW Pregnancy Choices Helpline 1800 008 463 and website provides support with free and confidential information on pregnancy choices in NSW, including details about accessing abortion information, support and services.

Investing in Women Funding Program

70. The 2021 Investing in Women Funding Program offered grants between \$5000 and \$100,000 aimed at “innovative programs that support the economic opportunity, advancement and participation of women and girls in NSW”. Applications closed on 30 April 2021. Successful applicants are not advertised on the website.

- (a) What is the status of the grants program?
- (b) How many applications were received?
- (c) How many grants were successful?
 - i. Who were the successful recipients?
 - ii. What were the successful projects?
 - iii. How much funding was awarded to each successful applicant?

ANSWER

70. I am advised:

The 2021 Investing in Women Grant Program will be finalised shortly. 177 applications were received.

Broderick review

71. The ongoing Broderick review is investigating the culture at Parliament and its management of unacceptable behaviour.

- (a) How involved has the minister been in ensuring the work of the review can proceed smoothly?
 - i. How and to what extent has the minister been supportive of women employed at Parliament in engaging with the review?
- (b) What role is the minister intending to take to ensure the review is appropriately considered and its recommendations implemented?

ANSWER

71. This is a matter for the Department of Parliamentary Services.

Women in the NSW public service

72. In the 2020 State of the NSW Public Sector Report, 66.4% of government employees were women, with just 41.1% of women in a senior leadership position.

- (a) What is the progress on the government's goal of reaching 50% female representation in leadership positions in the NSW public service?
 - i. How many of these women have been employed in ongoing or full-time positions?
 - ii. What is the average salary for women in this cohort?
 - iii. Is this salary at parity with their male counterparts?

ANSWER

72. This is a matter for Special Minister of State, Minister for the Public Service and Employee Relations, Aboriginal Affairs, and the Arts.

Community Mental Health support and services

73. How much does each LHD spend on community mental health services?

74. What planning work have each of the LHD's done to identify additional support models that they need for their local communities?

ANSWER

73. In 2021-22, local health districts and specialty health networks have been allocated \$596 million for non-admitted mental health.
74. Under the auspices of the Fifth National Mental Health Plan, local health districts and primary health networks have developed joint Regional Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plans. The plans were developed in partnership with local communities and stakeholders, including health care service providers, sector peak bodies, people with lived experience, carers and family members. Copies of the regional plans are available on the website of each primary health network.

Counselling appointments held via Telehealth

75. In relation to online or telehealth services for appointments related to mental health can you please advise how many of these were held in 2020?
76. For each of the LHD's, how many online or telehealth appointments for mental health were held in 2020 and to 1 November 2021?
77. In rural hospitals' Emergency Departments where they rely on mental health services to be conducted via Telehealth, what is the average wait time for someone presenting suicidal to be connected with a specialised trained health worker?

ANSWER

75. In 2020, NSW specialist community mental health services delivered 658,341 community contacts by telephone or videoconference.
76. The table below shows the number of community contacts delivered by telephone or videoconference for local health districts and speciality health networks in NSW, excluding Justice Health and Forensic Mental Health Network. Data for 2021 is from 1 January to 31 October 2021 as extracted in mid-November 2021, and will change with future data updates.

Local Health District/Specialty Health Network	2020	2021 (Jan to Oct)
Sydney Children's Hospitals	3,710	2,672
St Vincent's	9,602	11,102
Sydney	83,063	67,252
South Western Sydney	60,474	55,785
South Eastern Sydney	49,832	54,857
Illawarra Shoalhaven	37,511	29,859
Western Sydney	58,841	63,161

Nepean Blue Mountains	27,119	28,157
Northern Sydney	71,439	55,378
Central Coast	27,065	22,922
Hunter New England	105,825	88,239
Northern NSW	35,805	31,371
Mid North Coast	21,341	18,163
Southern NSW	16,238	10,328
Murrumbidgee	20,036	15,934
Western NSW	26,421	17,939
Far West	4,019	3,276
Total	658,341	576,395

77. NSW Health does not hold this data.

Men's Mental Health

78. How many people have been supported in the HealthWISE suicide prevention initiative in the Hunter New England Local Health District?
79. How many people have been supported in the Next Steps suicide attempt response team in the Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District?
80. How many people have been supported in the Kumpa Kiira Suicide Prevention Project in the far south-west NSW?

ANSWER

78. The HealthWISE Suicide Prevention initiative has supported over 238 people, male and female, who have attempted or are bereaved by suicide in the New England North West region since 2017. The initiative is funded to 2023-24.
79. The Next Steps Aftercare program has supported over 537 people, both male and female, in the Illawarra Shoalhaven since 2017. The initiative is funded to 2023-24.
The Next Steps Aftercare program is also funded in Southern NSW to 2023-24 and has supported over 52 people, both male and female, since July 2021.
80. The Coomealla Health Aboriginal Corporation (Kumpa Kiira) was funded under the Suicide Prevention Fund 2016-20, during which time it supported approximately 300 people per annum, across various events and programs.