



LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

PORTFOLIO COMMITTEES

BUDGET ESTIMATES 2021-2022 Supplementary Questions

Portfolio Committee No. 2 – Health

WOMEN, REGIONAL HEALTH, MENTAL HEALTH

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WOMEN, REGIONAL HEALTH, MENTAL HEALTH

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

Rural Women's Hidden Treasure Honour Roll

1. The Rural Women's Hidden Treasure Honour Roll recognises the impact of women who volunteer their time to keep their communities strong and healthy. Why have no names been added to the Honour Roll since 2020?
 - (a) Is the Minister aware that no rural women have been added to the honour roll since 2020?
 - (b) Why hasn't the volunteer work of rural women been recognised since 2020?

The Illawarra Women's Health Centre

2. The Illawarra Women's Health Centre submitted the Ministry of Health-funded business case for an Illawarra Women's Trauma Recovery Centre to the NSW Government (Women NSW) on 7 July 2021. Where is the review of this business case up to?
 - (a) What is the usual timeframe for the review of a business case?
 - (b) On receipt of this business case, the NSW Government was contractually obliged to 'coordinate cross agency input on the proposal for consideration by the Domestic and Family Violence Reform Delivery Board'. Has this occurred?
 - i. If so, can the NSW Government supply details on the outcome of this consultation?
 - ii. How often does the Domestic and Family Violence Reform Delivery Board meet?
 - iii. Has it met since this business case was submitted?
 - iv. As the Delivery Board is not an authorising body, who will be making a recommendation on the business case?
 - (c) What is the timeline in which the NSW Government will notify the Illawarra Women's Health Centre regarding the outcome of their business case review?
 - (d) Will the NSW Government commit to funding this Australia-first pilot?
 - (e) If the responsibility for assessing the business case does not lie with the Minister for Women, why did the Minister meet with representatives from the Illawarra Women's Health Centre to discuss the matter?
 - (f) Has any other Minister met with the Illawarra Women's Health Centre to discuss the business case?

Premier's Priority

3. What specific steps are being taken to ensure 50% of government sector senior leaders are women, as per the Premier's Priority?
 - (a) Apart from the behaviourally-informed interventions designed to encourage women to reapply for seniors roles they have missed out on, how are women's progressions to leadership roles within the government sector being supported, given that women are less likely to apply for leadership roles than men?

- (b) Will the NSW Government guarantee it will reach its 50% target of senior leadership roles held by women by 2025?
- 4. What initiatives and spending is the Women's portfolio undertaking to support the leadership of women and girls to break down gendered stereotypes?
- 5. How many staff were employed in Women NSW before the last State election?
- 6. Does the Minister have a role in coordinating and advising on women's policy and programs across the NSW Government?

Women's Strategy

- 7. The NSW Women's Strategy expires in 2022. Is a new strategy being created?
 - (a) If so, who is being consulted as part of that process?
 - (b) If not, when will the NSW Government commit to a new strategy?
- 8. How will the NSW Government evaluate the overall success of its focus areas in:
 - (a) The economy?
 - (b) Health and Wellbeing?
 - (c) Participation and empowerment
- 9. How often does the NSW Council for Women's Economic Opportunity meet?
 - (a) On what dates has it met in 2020/21 and 2019/2020?
 - (b) What input is it having into the development of NSW Government policy on women?

Women's Economic Opportunities Review

- 10. What is the timeline to complete the Women's Economic Opportunities Review?
- 11. What does the NSW Government aim to do with the review's findings?
 - (a) Will it be used to form a new strategy to drive economic reform for women in NSW?
 - (b) Would a new strategy include the broader issues of health and wellbeing?
- 12. Are external consultants being used as part of the review?
 - (a) If so, how much are they being paid?
- 13. How many of the review outcomes (as referenced in Scope item 7) does the Government expect to have responsibility for?
 - (a) Given the majority of women employed in NSW are not employees of the NSW Government, how does the Government propose to address the gender pay gap?
 - (b) Will the NSW Government commit to making changes as a result of the review to improve the conditions of early childhood educators (a work force made up primarily of women which has comparatively low pay rates)?

Housing

- 14. What proportion of applicants on the waiting list for public housing are:
 - (a) Women?

(b) Women over 50?

15. How many women over the age of 50 accessed emergency housing through the Links2Home program for the 2020-2021 financial year?
16. The 2016 Census shows that homelessness in NSW has increased at the fastest rate of any state, with homelessness among women increasing by 32%, and homelessness among women aged between 65 and 74 years increasing by 78%. Similarly, the NSW Homelessness Strategy states that between 2013-14 and 2016-17, NSW saw an 88% growth in the number of women over the age of 55 years accessing homelessness services. What is the NSW Government's approach to reducing the numbers of women facing homelessness?
17. Can the Minister advise how many frontline women's refuges there are across NSW as part of the Homelessness Services and the total funding to these services from the overall \$2.7 billion in the Stronger Communities cluster?
18. The NSW Homelessness Strategy 2018-2023 highlighted older women as a focus area for targeted housing options. What strategies have been put in place to lower the risk of homelessness in this high risk group?
19. Nine locations have been identified across Greater Sydney for boarding homes to be built for women at risk of homelessness. When will these nine locations have the facilities built and servicing the needs of women at risk of homelessness?
 - (a) How will the effectiveness of this program in preventing homelessness in older women be measured?
 - (b) Will this program be rolled out to other areas of need in NSW?
 - (c) If so, when?
20. Rental affordability hits single income women hard. What is the NSW Government doing to address rental affordability, especially as it affects low income women, older women and girls?

Health

21. Over the last 30 years, Women's Health Centres's core funding has remained between at \$250,000-\$600,000, reflecting no real increase in over 30 years. However, costs for Women's Health Centres have increased significantly, including wages, IT infrastructure and accreditation requirements. Can the NSW Government explain why it hasn't kept core funding for Women's Health Centres, at a minimum, in line with CPI?
 - (a) Why hasn't funding kept pace with overall funding of NSW Health?
 - (b) Will the NSW Government commit to a minimum increase in baseline funding of \$1 million per centre per annum, as is being requested in the sector?
22. Women's Health NSW had to turn people away from its services in the last quarter due to lack of available counsellors and the level of demand. Will the Minister commit to supporting a level of funding that will allow every woman who needs it access to these vital services?
23. Women's Health NSW is experiencing a surge in demand across its services. What is the NSW Government's plan to ensure that the women and girls who require their services can access them for improved health outcomes?

24. Trauma-informed practice is an important factor in helping women who are recovering from sexual assault, domestic violence and other forms of abuse. What steps is the Minister taking to ensure all women who need it have access to trauma-informed care across NSW?
25. What additional funding and resources is the NSW Government committing to overcome the disparity in maternal health outcomes between metropolitan and rural /regional NSW?
26. Given the overwhelming evidence of severe disparities in access to reproductive health services between metropolitan and rural/regional NSW, can the NSW Government specify the funding in this budget to start to reverse this situation?
27. In light of the positive impacts of Birthing on Country programs on maternal health and wellbeing, reduction of preterm births and the health of infants, what additional support is the NSW Government giving to new Birthing on Country sites across NSW?

COVID-19 impacts

28. Has the NSW Government collected data around the specific impacts of COVID-19 on women in NSW?
29. Does the NSW Government have data on how many women accessed its COVID-19 recovery programs?

Grants

30. How many one-off grants were accessed by women who were the victim-survivors of domestic and family violence living in DCJ-funded women's refuges as part of the second phase of the Return to Work program?
 - (a) Can the Minister provide a breakdown of the postcodes in which the grants were allocated?
31. How many groups/organisations applied for the Investing in Women Funding Program between March 31 and April 30, 2021?
 - (a) Can the Minister provide a breakdown of the postcodes in which groups operate that were allocated funding in 2021?

Community Mental Health support and services

32. How much does each LHD spend on community mental health services?
33. What planning work have each of the LHD's done to identify additional support models that they need for their local communities?

Counselling appointments held via Telehealth

34. In relation to online or telehealth services for appointments related to mental health can you please advise how many of these were held in 2021?
35. For each of the LHD's, how many online or telehealth appointments for mental health were held in 2021?

36. In rural hospitals Emergency Departments where they rely on mental health services to be conducted via Telehealth, what was the average wait time in 2021 for someone presenting suicidal to be connected with a specialised trained health worker?

Men's Mental Health

37. How many people have been supported in the HealthWISE suicide prevention initiative in the Hunter New England Local Health District?
38. How many people have been supported in the Next Steps suicide attempt response team in the Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District?

Mental Health patients waiting in Emergency Departments

39. In 2021, how many patients seeking admission for psychiatric treatment have waited more than 24 hours in the emergency department because a psychiatry unit bed was not available?
40. Can you please provide a list of the hospitals this happened in?

Step up step down program

41. Will the NSW Government will establish a state wide Step-up Step-down program, similar to The Buduwa Step-Up Step-Down Service across NSW?
42. Are there investigations underway for this to be expanded to any other LHDs in the near future?
43. If so, where?

Post-natal depression

44. When will the two new mother and baby mental health wards at Royal Prince Alfred and Westmead hospitals open?

\$130 million to fast track mental health recovery

45. How much of the \$20 million committed to provide 55,000 additional services to young people through local headspace centres been allocated?
46. Do you know how many additional services have actually been delivered?
47. Is the Multicultural Mental Health Line up and running?

\$1.5 million to enhance youth mental health services

48. Has the Moderated Online Social Therapy (MOST) designed by youth mental health organisation Orygen, been completely rolled out?
49. How many youth mental health services now have this program?

50. Where are these services located?

Bringing mental health support closer to home

51. How many calming non clinical hubs called Safe Havens are in place?

52. How many Suicide Prevention Outreach Teams (SPOTs) are in place across NSW?

53. Where are these teams located?

Lockdown lifeline-mental health support package

54. How much of the \$3 million allocated to CALD communities for mental health services has been allocated?

55. What community organisations have been funded?

Cost of locums

56. What is the average cost per day for Locums visiting rural NSW?

57. What is the highest rate that is currently paid for Locums visiting NSW per day?

58. What other costs are covered for Locums when they visit rural NSW? (ie accommodation, food, incidentals)

59. What is the benefit to the community to have locums rather than permanent doctors?

60. Have you had any discussions about capping the Locum rates?