

Rachel Stephen-Smith MLA

Minister for Health

Minister for Families and Community Services

Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs

Member for Kurrajong

RESPONSE TO QUESTION ON NOTICE**Questions on Notice Paper No 36****27 October 2023****Question No. 1481**

Asked by **MRS ELIZABETH KIKKERT MLA** –

- 1) How many people contacted the Alcohol and Drug Service Intake and Helpline seeking assistance for themselves or someone they knew for assistance dealing with a drug issue, between 1 January 2022 and 28 October 2023.
- 2) Of the contacts referred to in part (1), how many were subsequently referred to (a) the government counselling team/another government organisation and (b) a non-government agency.
- 3) How many residential rehabilitation beds existed in the ACT, as of 28 October 2023.
- 4) Of the beds referred to in part (3), how many were (a) owned by the ACT, (b) owned by non-government organisations and (c) vacant and available for new clients.
- 5) What was the waiting time for a client to be offered a bed in a residential rehabilitation facility, as of 28 October 2023, for (a) government facilities and (b) non-government facilities.
- 6) How much was spent on government provided drug rehabilitation services in the (a) 2022-23 and (b) 2021-22 financial years.
- 7) How much was spent by government supported non-government organisations on drug rehabilitation services in the (a) 2022-23 and (b) 2021-22 financial years.
- 8) How much funding is being provided to government provided drug rehabilitation services in the 2023-24 financial year.
- 9) How much funding is being provided to government supported non-government organisations on drug rehabilitation services in the 2023-24 financial year.

MINISTER STEPHEN-SMITH - The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

- 1) The Alcohol and Drug Service Intake and Helpline received a total of 2,453 calls between 27 January 2023 and 28 October 2023. Central Health Intake Services (CHI) has engaged a new system and as a result is unable to provide data for activity prior to 27 January 2023. The service receives between 250-300 calls per month on average.

- 2) CHI is unable to provide this data due to the new system being implemented in January 2023.
- 3) As at 28 October 2023 there were 104 residential rehabilitation beds in the ACT operated by non-government service providers:

- Karralika Programs – 44 beds
- Ted Noffs Foundation – 10 beds (aged under-18)
- Directions Arcadia House – 12 beds
- Salvation Army Fyshwick – 38 beds

The Government has committed \$49 million to build the Watson Health Precinct which will provide a culturally appropriate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community controlled residential rehabilitation facility.

This number does not include transition beds which are available on a temporary basis in a structured supportive environment for people transitioning back into the community following residential rehabilitation.

Canberra Hospital does not have any residential rehabilitation beds, however there is the Withdrawal Unit that has 10 beds.

4)

- (a) All residential rehabilitation beds in the ACT are operated by non-government services. The 10 Withdrawal Unit beds on the Canberra Hospital campus are owned by Canberra Health Services (CHS).
- (b) See response to Question 3.
- (c) ACT Government does not hold information on the number of Non-Government Organisation (NGO) operated residential rehabilitation beds vacant and available on this date. Occupancy data for the Withdrawal Unit at Canberra Hospital is currently not available due to the implementation of the Digital Health Record.

5)

- (a) The waiting times to access a bed within the Withdrawal Unit at CHS is dependent upon availability. Currently, a participant who meets the eligibility criteria can wait 1-2 weeks for a bed to become available.
- (b) Waiting times as of 28 October 2023 cannot be provided because there is no centralised waiting list for residential rehabilitation facilities. NGOs operate their own waiting lists on an individual basis. There are no government-operated rehabilitation facilities in the ACT.

- 6) The expenditure and budget for the CHS Withdrawal Unit is as follows:

Year	Budget	Expenditure
2021-22	\$2,174,416	\$1,621,137
2022-23	\$2,210,314	\$1,988,599

7)

- (a) The ACT Health Directorate (ACTHD) provided funding of \$13.16 million (excluding GST) to NGOs to provide alcohol and other drug treatment, support and harm reduction services in 2021-22, including funding to support treatment provided under the Drug and Alcohol Sentencing List.
- (b) ACTHD provided \$15.09 million (excluding GST) to NGOs to provide alcohol and other drug treatment, support and harm reduction services in 2022-23. These totals include funding to support treatment provided under the Drug and Alcohol Sentencing List.

In the alcohol and drug treatment sector, 'rehabilitation' refers to intensive structured programs often delivered in residential settings, but sometimes as day programs.

However annual funding provided by the ACT Government to NGOs supports a range of alcohol and other drug services of varying intensity suitable for a range of client issues and preferred treatment options. As well as residential rehabilitation and day rehabilitation programs, the range of services funded also includes needle and syringe programs, information and education (for example harm reduction), peer support programs, overdose prevention, pill testing, counselling (individual and group), case management, sobering up shelter beds, and residential withdrawal beds.

- 8) The funding budgeted for the CHS Withdrawal Unit for the 2023-24 financial year is \$2.230 million.
- 9) The 2023-24 Budget includes more than \$17 million (GST exclusive) to NGOs to provide alcohol and other drug treatment, support and harm reduction services. This includes funding to support implementation of the Drug and Alcohol Sentencing List and the fixed site drug checking service.

Approved for circulation to the Member and incorporation into Hansard.



Rachel Stephen-Smith MLA
Minister for Health

Date: 29/11/23

This response required 8 hours and 30 minute to complete, at an approximate cost of \$729.27.