

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 33

1 September 2023

Question No. 1336

MS LEANNE CASTLEY: To ask the Minister for Health —

- 1) How much was spent on the feasibility work for the abandoned election commitment for an elective surgery centre at the University of Canberra Hospital.
- 2) How many staff worked on this project and how many hours did they spend on this project.
- 3) When was the project initiated.
- 4) When was the project abandoned.
- 5) Is there any work or staff still working on the project; if so, what work are they completing.
- 6) Are there any ongoing costs for this project; if so, (a) what are the ongoing costs and (b) how long will the Government continue to spend on this election commitment and what will be the total cost of this project including ongoing costs.
- 7) Were any parts of the feasibility study or work on this project contracted or outsourced; if so, (a) what services were contracted, (b) how much did it cost and (c) how long did the entity work on the project.
- 8) Given that the Minister is quoted in *The Canberra Times* article saying that “CHS had strengthened partnerships with the private sector and more surgeries were being delivered”, what surgeries are private providers assisting CHS with.
- 9) For each contract with private providers for elective surgeries, (a) how many surgeries are each private provider contracted to perform, (b) what is the length of the contract, (c)

what is the cost of the contract, (d) how many surgeries have been completed to date and (e) how has the Minister strengthened partnerships with private providers.

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

- 1) \$2,500 (including GST).
- 2) Several clinical and project staff were actively involved in the project from late 2021 until the project closed in January 2023. However, staff hours are not separately recorded against individual projects. Typically, staff are actively involved in several projects concurrently.
- 3) The project commenced in late 2021.
- 4) The project was closed in January 2023.
- 5) No.
- 6) No.
- 7) Yes.
 - a. Consultants were engaged to complete data analysis to inform options for planning and development of the elective surgery centre. Consultants were also engaged to provide infrastructure commercial advice.
 - b. \$2,500 (Including GST).
 - c. Consultants were engaged between April 2022 and September 2022.
- 8) Some surgeries are delivered in private hospital partnerships for each of the following specialties:
 - Orthopaedic surgery
 - General surgery
 - Oral surgery
 - Otolaryngological surgery
 - Gynaecology
 - Ophthalmology
 - Paediatric surgery
 - Vascular surgery
 - Bariatric surgery
 - Urology

9)

- a. The private providers do not have contracts they have Deeds. The Elective Joint Replacement Program (EJRP) has a guaranteed target of 400 joints for 2023-24 Financial Year. There may be blocks of activity that are purchased as part of a deed with specific types of surgeries purchased via work orders on a case-by-case basis. All other surgeries are purchased via work orders on a case-by-case basis. There is no commitment to purchase a specific volume.
- b. Deeds are for a period of three years, with the option of a two-year extension.
- c. The Deeds do not have a contract cost, payments are made for individual procedures completed. Procedure costs are commercial-in-confidence and vary for each procedure.
- d. In 2022-23, approximately 2,100 procedures were completed through private hospitals. A similar volume is expected in 2023-24.
- e. Following the COVID-19 pandemic, the ACT Government has invested significantly in the delivery of elective surgery across the Territory.

This funding has increased the number of elective procedures delivered in private hospitals, including complex head and neck cancer surgery and joint replacement procedures. Canberra Health Services is also working in partnership with existing private providers which will see them undertake elective surgery on behalf of the ACT in NSW private hospitals.

Approved for circulation to the Member and incorporation into Hansard.



Rachel Stephen-Smith MLA
Minister for Health

Date: 31/10/23

This response required 1hr 55mins to complete, at an approximate cost of \$240.40.