

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 32

30 June 2023

Question No. 1318

Asked by **MRS KIKKERT MLA** –

- 1) What initiatives, campaigns, programs and other supports are currently provided by the ACT Government to help people with (a) quitting smoking (tobacco and cannabis) and (b) smoking addiction (tobacco and cannabis).
- 2) What is the amount of funding provided for each initiative, campaign, program and other supports listed as answers in part (1).

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

1(a)(b) and 2:

Alcohol, tobacco and other drug mainstream services

The Government currently funds the alcohol, tobacco and other drug (ATOD) non-government organisation sector to provide a range of treatment, support and harm reduction services for people experiencing harm from alcohol, tobacco and other drugs. Funded service types include residential rehabilitation, withdrawal management, psychosocial counselling, non-residential day programs, the sobering up shelter, and information and education. Smoking cessation support is embedded within routine practice of ATOD service providers. Supports provided for ATOD issues are inclusive of cannabis dependence, which in 2021-22 was the principal drug of concern for 14.3 per cent of ACT ATOD service users.

Alcohol and Drugs Service (ADS)

Canberra Health Services (CHS) provides clinical smoking (cannabis and tobacco) support to clients in the care of Alcohol and Drugs Service (ADS) for withdrawal support where there is concurrent use of tobacco and/or cannabis.



CHS provides input into strategic policy direction and participates in the ACTHD *Tobacco and E-Cigarette Community of Practice Education* workshops. Smoking cessation and addiction support more broadly sits within the primary care sector. The work detailed above is undertaken within the CHS ADS budget and is not separately funded.

First nations health services

The Government funds Winnunga Nimmityjah Aboriginal Health and Community Services to provide harm reduction, including information and education, support and case management to tackle smoking, which aims to reduce smoking rates, severity of dependence, harmful drug use and behaviours, reduce the uptake of smoking and increase quit attempts for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the ACT. Current annual funding for this activity is \$692,846.96 (GST exclusive).

Funding is also provided to Gugan Gulwan Youth Aboriginal Corporation to provide alcohol and other drug harm reduction services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people aged up to and including 25 years. These services aim to reduce the severity of dependence, amount and/or frequency of drug use, harmful drug use and related behaviour in the target group. Smoking cessation is embedded within routine practice of ATOD service providers and supports provided for ATOD issues are inclusive of cannabis dependence. Current annual funding for this activity is \$763,076.95 (GST exclusive).

Cessation support services

In support of smoking cessation, the Government provides funding to:

- St Vincent's Hospital Sydney to deliver the ACT Quitline smoking cessation telephone counselling service, targeting people in the ACT who smoke tobacco, are currently smoking and/or are planning to quit smoking. Annual funding for this service in 2022-23 was \$115,658 (GST exclusive).
- The Cancer Council ACT for smoking cessation programs to promote, coordinate and conduct smoking and vaping cessation programs and deliver training to relevant personnel (including general practitioners and pharmacists) to build capacity in the community. The Cancer Council ACT refers individual requests for smoking cessation support to the ACT Quitline. Current annual funding for the Cancer Council ACT is \$347,381 (GST exclusive), however this funding is for a wider service contract that includes cancer support services and SunSmart Programs in addition to smoking cessation programs.

Healthy Canberra Grants

Three organisations were funded from the Focus on Reducing Smoking Related Harm Healthy Canberra Grants (HCG) round, which had funding available from 2020-21 to 2023-24 and aimed to support community-based activities to improve the health of Canberrans.

- The Cancer Council ACT was funded \$284,000 (GST exclusive) to deliver *Tackling Tobacco in the ACT*, which supports community organisations to provide smoking cessation support to employees and clients, empower community workforces, and support positive change in organisational policies, systems and culture around tobacco related harm.

- Directions ACT was funded \$289,591 (GST exclusive) to deliver the *Butt it out! Smoking Support Program*. This program aims to increase the number of smoking reduction and cessations for Directions ACT clients and reduce overall smoking levels amongst participants.
- Worldview Foundation Limited was funded \$325,696 (GST exclusive) to deliver the Pre-Release Non-Indigenous Supplement Program along with the Post Release Activity Support Program. These programs were delivered to the Alexander Maconochie Centre (AMC) and aimed to increase awareness and reduce smoking, drug, and alcohol use in participants pre and post release from AMC.

ACT Corrective Services

Detainees in AMC can access 12 weeks of nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) (patches and lozenges) and ongoing smoking cessation support.

Custodial staff are currently providing nicotine lozenges and patches to detainees in the AMC to increase touchpoints with detainees attempting to quit and provide stronger monitoring of NRT within the AMC. The cost of funded NRT (patches and lozenges) is \$80,000 associated to the 12-week period and ongoing costs for new detainees.

Detainees can also access the QUIT website through the detainee computer system enabling online support as required. The Quitline telephone number is also available for detainees to contact for advice and support. First Nations people who call the QUIT helpline can ask to speak with an Aboriginal QUIT Advisor. Staff are being consulted and have access to support services through the QUIT helpline and through the ACT Government Employee Assistance Program.

Approved for circulation to the Member and incorporation into Hansard.



**Rachel Stephen-Smith MLA
Minister for Health**

Date: 27/7/23

This response required 8 hours and 5 minutes to complete, at an approximate cost of \$727.76.