

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 17

6 May 2022

Question No. 772

MS CASTLEY MLA: To ask the Minister for Health—

- (1) What services does the Government fund for (a) hospitals, (b) walk-in centres and (c) clinics to take patients from transport stops to those buildings.
- (2) What is the schedule of these services.
- (3) Have there been any complaints to any (a) hospitals, (b) walk-in centres and (c) clinics about availability of public transport to the location.
- (4) Does the Government offer any subsidies for public transport for patients and families; if so, can the Minister provide details.
- (5) How much do these services cost per year for each building since 2016.
- (6) How many (a) full-time equivalent, (b) part-time and (c) casual staff operate these services for each building.
- (7) When did this service start for each building.
- (8) Does the Government have any plans to review or increase these services; if so, please provide details.

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

- (1)
 - a) The Canberra Hospital Courtesy Bus operates on a circular, continuous route looping through the campus, with stops at the Transport Canberra bus stops on Gilmore Crescent and Yamba Drive incorporated on an as needed basis since 2021.



Calvary Public Hospital Bruce (CPHB) does not have a dedicated patient transport service in the ACT.

If CPHB requires patient transport to facilitate patient transfer outside of the ambulance service CPHB arranges this through Canberra Health Services (CHS) patient transport service.

Transport Canberra operates multiple bus services which provide links to a range of health facilities. These include the 901 service (formally known as the Bruce Shuttle) which links the University of Canberra Hospital and Calvary Public Hospital Bruce (CPHB) to the Belconnen Bus Interchange. This service operates Monday to Friday between the hours of 09:00 and 16:20pm. Route 902 (formally known as the AMC Shuttle) links the Canberra Hospital to the Woden Bus Interchange seven days a week between the hours of 07:41am and 19:35pm. Normal fares apply for both services.

- b) No transport services are provided specifically by CHS to Walk-in Centres however there is public transport available through Transport Canberra's light rail and bus network to these locations. Further information about these services can be found on the CHS website here: <https://www.canberrahealthservices.act.gov.au/locations-and-directions>.
 - c) No transport services are provided specifically by CHS to clinics however there is public transport available through Transport Canberra's light rail and bus network to these locations. Further information about these services can be found on the CHS website.
- (2) The Canberra Hospital Courtesy Bus loops through stops on campus and surrounding bus stops every 15-20 minutes. Please see the above responses for information and links to access schedule of other services.
 - (3) CHS' Consumer Feedback and Engagement Team (CFET) does not record complaints related to public transport. However, I receive occasional feedback about public transport access to hospital services and this was a theme in consultation for the Canberra Hospital Master Plan.
 - (4) CHS does not routinely offer any subsidised travel outside that provided generally to concession card holders and the Taxi Subsidy Scheme through ACT Revenue Office. CHS works with patients to assess requests for taxi vouchers on a case-by-case basis and there are several alternative options to ensure patients are able to attend appointments and return home safely.

CPHB may offer patients a taxi voucher based on a recommendation from clinical staff and the patient's individual circumstances; each case is assessed individually. CPHB clinical staff will authorise an ACT Revenue Office application for subsidised transport if requested for patients that meet the scheme criteria.

Other community transport services and public transport options, depending on accessibility criteria include:

ACT Community Assistance and Support Program

ACT Health's Community Assistance and Support Program (CASP) funds eight providers to deliver subsidised transport services to assist eligible ACT residents and their carers to access medical appointments and other health services. Further information about CASP eligibility and

available services is available on the ACT Health Directorate website:

<https://health.act.gov.au/services-and-programs/act-community-assistance-support-program-casp>

Community Bus Services

The Community Bus Service (CBS) is funded by the ACT Government and operated by the ACT's Regional Community Services. The CBS is for eligible ACT residents who are socially isolated due to a lack of transport options and provides flexible bus services Monday to Friday, generally within their own regional area. Further information on eligibility and how to apply is available on the Community Services Directorate website:

https://www.communityservices.act.gov.au/community/community_bus_services

Taxi Subsidy Scheme through ACT Revenue Office

The ACT Taxi Subsidy Scheme (TSS) provides financial assistance to eligible ACT residents with a disability or significant mobility restriction preventing them from using public and community transport. A TSS member must be a passenger in the taxi to be eligible for the subsidy however other non TSS members may accompany them in the taxi. More information on eligibility and how to apply is available via: <https://www.revenue.act.gov.au/community-assistance/taxi-subsidy-scheme>

Flexible Bus Service

Transport Canberra operates the Flexible Bus Service which is available to eligible community members and has remained available throughout COVID. The Flexible Bus Service operates in five zones to help Canberra residents, such as the aged or people with mobility difficulty, to get from their home to local community locations such as hospitals, shopping centres and medical centres. More information is available via: <https://www.transport.act.gov.au/about-us/accessible-travel/flexible-bus-service>

Canberra Region Cancer Service Volunteer Transport Program

The Canberra Region Cancer Centre Volunteer Transport Program transports eligible patients to and from their appointments for cancer treatment.

- (5) Annual costs for the Canberra Hospital Courtesy Bus since 2016 are as follows:

Courtesy Bus cost (ex GST)*	
2016	\$35,517.71
2017	\$36,202.74
2018	\$13,359.85
2019	\$17,521.60
2020	\$20,255.46
2021	\$31,925.60
2022	\$18,122.68

* The cost of the Courtesy Bus fluctuates annually due to several factors, including vehicle model/type changes and adjustment of kilometres travelled by the vehicle, which in turn impacts the monthly lease costs.

- (6) The Canberra Hospital Courtesy Bus driver is provided by a contractor, rather than full-time equivalent staff. The Canberra Hospital Courtesy Bus service began in 2015.
- (7) Review of the Canberra Hospital Courtesy Bus occurs continuously as feedback is received and changes occur on the campus and surrounding areas.

Approved for circulation to the Member and incorporation into Hansard.



Rachel Stephen-Smith MLA
Minister for Health

Date:.....1/8/22.....

This response required 300 minutes to complete, at an approximate cost of \$449.36