

## Response to question on notice

### Questions on Notice Paper No 16

3 March 2026

### Question No. 880

**Ms Castley:** To ask the Minister for Health

- 1) Which ward at Canberra Hospital was simultaneously impacted by asbestos, blowflies and rats and how many individuals, including (i) staff, (ii) patients, (iii) visitors and (iv) others were impacted.
- 2) Why was the ward referred to in part (1) not immediately closed.
- 3) How many days elapsed between the first concern being raised, the Canberra Health Services CEO being informed, and the Minister for Health being informed of the matters referred to in part (1).
- 4) How many concerns and complaints were made by (i) staff, (ii) patients and (iii) others before the ward was closed.
- 5) Did Canberra Health Services provide staff with insect repellent (and related matter) or did staff have to provide these at their own expense
- 6) How many other wards are currently subject to asbestos, insect, or vermin risks

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

- 1) Canberra Health Services (CHS) is not aware that there has been any ward experiencing simultaneous impacts of asbestos, blowflies and rats. If the Member has received a complaint, CHS would appreciate this being shared so that the matter can be investigated.
- 2) Refer to response to question 1.
- 3) Refer to response to question 1.
- 4) Refer to response to question 1.
- 5) Refer to response to question 1.

- 6) Canberra Hospital was built in the 1970s and, as such, asbestos is present in many of the buildings. CHS manages this through a hazardous materials register. If asbestos is impacted through infrastructure works, it is managed according to the relevant regulations. Issues of vermin and insect infestation do occur from time to time. CHS manages vermin control through regular preventative measures such as cleaning, bait controls and regular audits. In the event of an outbreak despite these preventative measures, CHS takes action to manage accordingly and remove the issue.

**Approved for circulation to the Member and incorporation into Hansard.**



**Rachel Stephen-Smith MLA**  
**Health**

**Date:** 30 | 3 | 26

This response required 1 hr 10 mins to complete, at an approximate cost of \$123.37.