



Inquiry into Annual and Financial Reports 2023–2024

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Ms Leanne Castley

Addressed to: Minister for Health

Reference: Health – Canberra Health Services

Hearing: 20 February 2025

In relation to: Health costing – Operating Theatres

Question received: 24 February 2025

Answer Due: 04 March 2025

- 1) How many operating theatres are in use at Canberra Hospital and Calvary Hospital?
- 2) Are these theatres fully utilised or operating at partial capacity?
- 3) Can a breakdown of the utility rate be provided?
- 4) How many operating theatres can be used simultaneously?
- 5) What costings and analyses have been undertaken to ensure maximum utility from the operating theatres?
- 6) What quotes or costings were requested for the transfer of the Joint Replacement Unit from Calvary Hospital to Canberra Hospital?
- 7) Is the above cost to be included in the extra budgetary appropriations that have been requested?

Rachel Stephen-Smith MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

- 1) Canberra Hospital has 15 funded operating theatres, including a theatre in the neurostimulation suite. There are no specific theatres funded in either Calvary John James Hospital or Calvary Bruce Private Hospital. North Canberra Hospital has seven operating theatres in use, with resourcing equivalent to five theatres operating on a full-time basis.
- 2) Canberra Hospital and North Canberra Hospital both have physical theatre capacity that can be further utilised as service demand continues to grow and additional resources become available, including through insourcing surgery currently undertaken in private hospitals and repatriating surgery from interstate hospitals (for example, gynaecological oncology and expansion of paediatric surgery).
- 3) The theatre utilisation rate is not captured.

- 4) See responses to questions 1 and 2.
- 5) The Integrated Operations Centre at Canberra Hospital has a live feed from the Epic Digital Health Record (DHR) to manage theatre scheduling. NCH has completed waitlist validation and surgical specialty specific trajectories to determine demand versus capacity for overdue waitlist clearance and sustainability. In addition, teams continue to identify procedures that can safely and appropriately be completed in procedure rooms as opposed to utilising operating theatres.
- 6) CHS is continuing to build capacity to undertake additional joint replacements in Canberra Hospital (noting that complex procedures for people with comorbid conditions are already undertaken at Canberra Hospital). The work done to consider insourcing the Elective Joint Replacement Program has resulted in a significant saving next financial year following further contract negotiations with Calvary Health Care. CHS has advised that multiple quotations were sought in relation to the delivery of this program.
- 7) No. The renegotiated contracts from 2025-26 and will mean a more cost-effective delivery of public elective joint replacements and do not require additional funding in 2024-25. The ACT Government is actively negotiating more favourable contracts with private providers to bring arrangements more in line with other jurisdictions and provide for the most effective use of taxpayer funding for the delivery public elective surgery.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Social Policy

Signature:



Date:

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By the Minister for Health, Rachel Stephen-Smith