



# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

## FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

STANDING COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY INCLUSION  
Mr Michael Pettersson MLA (Chair), Miss Laura Nuttall MLA (Deputy Chair),  
Ms Nicole Lawder MLA

### ANSWER TO QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE (QTON)

#### Public Hearing - Inquiry into Loneliness and Social Isolation in the ACT

#### Tuesday, 28 May 2024

Asked by Ms Nicole Lawder MLA on 28 May 2024: Ms Emma Davidson MLA, Minister for Mental Health and Minister for Population Health took on notice the following question:

Ref: *Hansard - Uncorrected Proof Transcript (UPT)*, 28 May 2024, page 28.

In relation to: Wellbeing Framework Indicators use for data analysis

**MS LAWDER:** In your submission, you talk about opportunities which might be considered to address loneliness and social isolation across all cohorts, and one of them includes the wellbeing framework indicators; to perhaps further improve the data collection and presentation to enable intersectional data analysis for people. Is that a wish list one day, or is there work already underway to improve the data collection and presentation in the wellbeing framework?

**Ms Davidson:** I can take on notice to get back to you with the detail of what work is already being done to improve that. I think it is something that we are learning about as we do it, and it is really, I find, helpful to see how things iterate over time and demonstrate that yes, actually we are learning how to do things better. We have not just said, "Yes, we will bring it in," and we can tick that box and it is done now. We are actively looking at how do we make this most useful? How can we use it most effectively?

Emma Davidson MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows: –

When it comes to collecting, interpreting and presenting data that can shine a light on the intersectional issues that contribute to loneliness and social isolation in the ACT, we need to be very conscious of people's privacy and not all analysis can, or should, be made publicly available.

That said, the ACT Government collects data on loneliness through the University of Canberra's *Living Well in the ACT Region* survey. The ACT Government has also recently established a strategic partnership with the ANU, which provides access to several ANU researchers to work in collaboration with officials on linked ACT administrative data.

In January 2024, the ACT was selected by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) as the pilot jurisdiction for the development of a 'life course' data asset that will link ACT administrative data with Commonwealth administrative data. These linked data, together with the partnerships with the ABS, the ANU and the University of Canberra, create a significant capability to explore wellbeing in the ACT, including in relation to loneliness and social isolation, and the impacts that these have on the lives of people in the ACT. Where appropriate and safe, the findings from these analyses will be progressively shared with policymakers, service providers and the community in the formats most useful to each of these.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Education and Community Inclusion

Signature: *Emma Davidson*

Date: 11 June 2024

By Emma Davidson MLA, Minister for Population Health, Minister for Mental Health