



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE COVID-19 2021 PANDEMIC RESPONSE
Ms Elizabeth Lee MLA (Chair), Ms Suzanne Orr MLA (Deputy Chair), Ms Jo Clay MLA

ANSWER TO QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE 4 November 2021

Asked by Ms Elizabeth Lee MLA on 4 November 2021: Dr Elizabeth Moore took on notice the following question(s):

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In relation to:

Dr Moore: Where we have found a difference is young people have disproportionately shown increases in anxiety and depression. So they seem to have—and again, understandable in terms of transitions—found themselves noting that they have more anxiety and depression. Where the data shows a difference is we have not seen the rates of presentation to hospital services go up in older people. Again, it has been in that younger age group, the 12 to 17s.

When we are in lockdown or stay at home orders, actually our presentations go down to the emergency department, and again that could be explained by the fact that people cannot get out. They do not get out. So there is a number of factors in there. When we get out of lockdown or get out of the stay at home orders, last time there was an increase back to our pre-COVID levels. And again we are going to see that, I think, as we come out of this lockdown. We are starting to see that.

In terms of overall increase, yes, there has been an overall increase compared to last year and again to 2019 of the 12- to 17-year-olds particularly but also the 30- to 40-year-olds. And so that is where some of our targeted intervention has gone to.

THE CHAIR: Thank you for that, Dr Moore. Maybe perhaps you need to take this on notice, but do you have actual figures in terms of some of the increases that you refer to?

Dr Moore: Yes, it is in the public domain but if I could take that question on notice and refer it back to you?

MINISTER DAVIDSON MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

There has been a 21% increase in calls to Kidsline in 2021 when compared with the same period in 2020 and 59% increase compared with the same period in 2019 (AIHW).

Lifeline recorded a 1% increase in calls in 2021 compared with the same period in 2020 and a 60% increase compared with the same period in 2019 (AIHW).

Mental health presentations to the Emergency Department have fluctuated with reduced presentations during the period of stay-at-home orders. These are now returning to pre lockdown rates.

People aged 30-49 years account for 32-33% of all suicidal and self-harm presentations to the emergency department.

There has been a 30% increase in 2021 YTD in the number of young people (under 17 years old) seen each week in Child and Adolescent Community Services in the ACT compared with 2020.

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on the COVID-19 2021 Pandemic Response

Signature: 

Date: 24 November 2021

By the Minister for Mental Health, Emma Davidson