



Standing Committee on Health and Community Wellbeing

Inquiry into Annual and Financial Reports 2020-2021
ANSWER TO QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE
21 February 2022

Asked by Jonathan Davis MLA on 21 February 2022: Emma Davidson MLA took on notice the following question(s):

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In relation to:

THE CHAIR: Minister, you might want to take this on notice. I would like to know how many positions the government has currently funded that are yet to be filled for mental health professionals across the system. I understand that there were some additional funds allocated in the last budget, but you have highlighted the challenge of recruiting some of those staff. If we could just get the number of how many staff we are trying to recruit right now, that would be wonderful.

Ms Davidson: Across all of our Canberra Health Services that number does fluctuate quite a lot because we are talking about large numbers of people across a really diverse range of different fields. There are also peer mental health workers that are working for some of our NGO partners where we are funding the service but it is actually delivered by a partner organisation. That could be quite complex. Can you give a bit more detail on what it is you are looking for?

THE CHAIR: I could probably help by being more specific. How many psychologists and psychiatrists we want to employ as government employees; so how many positions you have available across the health system.

Ms Davidson: I can take that on notice.

THE CHAIR: Wonderful.

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

The ACT Health Directorate has one position, that of a Chief Psychiatrist, that is required to be filled by a psychiatrist. A psychiatrist is currently employed in this position. There are currently no psychologist-specific positions.

Calvary Public Hospital Bruce has three Psychologists positions and does not employ any Psychiatrists. Psychiatrists for the Territory are employed by Canberra Health Services and work across both Calvary Public Hospital and Canberra Public Hospital.

Canberra Health Services has 90.6 Consultant and Registrar Psychiatrists and 253.9 Health Professional Officers, which includes Psychologists.

Classification	Budget FTE	Vacant FTE
Medical Registrars	51.35 39.25	7.4* 4.5
Health Professional Officer (HPO) Allied Health – psychologist, social workers, occupational therapist, and assistants in allied health.	253.90	43.7

* Canberra Health Services contract Visiting Medical Officer (VMO) to fill medical and registrar short falls.

Mental Health, Justice Health and Alcohol and Drug Services (MHJHADS) employ psychologists under the Allied Health/ Health Professional Officer classification, it is not possible to break down this data into the type of Allied Health professional required i.e., psychologist, social workers, occupational therapist.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Health and Community Wellbeing

Signature: 

Date: 4 April 2022

By the Minister for Mental Health, Minister Davidson