



# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

## FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

### SELECT COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES 2024-2025

Ms Nicole Lawder MLA (Chair), Ms Suzanne Orr MLA (Deputy Chair),  
Miss Laura Nuttall MLA

### ANSWER TO QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE DURING PUBLIC HEARINGS

Asked by: Ms Suzanne Orr MLA

Addressed to: Minister for Mental Health

Reference: Uncorrected Hansard Transcript pages 60 and 61

Hearing Date: 23 July 2024

QTON lodgement date: 24 July 2024

Answer Due Date: 29 July 2024

**MS ORR:** Great. Thank you very much. So my question was looking at the rollovers. And like I said, by my calculations, in 2023-24 it was 48 per cent, in 24-25 it was 44 per cent. Those are the rollover amounts, and I just wanted to get an understanding of what those rollover amounts were taking in and where those projects or programs are up to.

**Mr Ganeshalingam:** So all of the rollovers are around capital projects. So when the projects are initiated, or initially developed part of the business case, we do estimate how much we are going to spend on each financial year. But obviously, sometimes our estimates are pretty ambitious, because some of the external legislative requirement or licensing we need to take. So once those impediments hit us, we look at it to see what realistically we can spend each year, and then to profile it—roll it over.

So last year, yes, we have rolled over a fair bit, and we are actively trying to manage that program so that we can get that money through that rollover. But in order to do that we need milestones to be completed.

**MS ORR:** So I understand how rollovers work, in the sense it is the money you have profiled but have not been able to commit, and take the minister's point sometimes that is just because invoices come in at different days. But what I was actually hoping to get was just a bit more of an understanding of what that figure represents? So what projects have been rolled over, as opposed to the—because I can read the figure in the budget paper.

**Ms Davidson:** Yes. Would it be more helpful if we provided you, as a question on notice, with a list of the projects that have been rolled over and the dollar amounts for them? Would that be helpful?

**MS ORR:** Yes. Is it just the projects? I mean, is it just capital expenditure or is it actually looking at funding for services to go—because I mean, we do not then just leave a building empty doing nothing. There is usually a service that is delivered for it.

**Ms Davidson:** Yes. That is right. And so a breakdown that shows, "This much from capital, and this much"—

**MS ORR:** Yes. If you do not have the detail in front of you as to what that covers, that is fine. But I mean, I would hope that you had a little bit of idea of some of things. So if there is anything, you know, off the top of your head, I am happy to have that discussion now, but if you need to take further detail on notice?

**Ms Davidson:** It might actually be more useful for you if we took it on notice, because there are a lot of projects.

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

There are four mental health recurrent related rollovers (referred as reprofiling) listed on page 16 of the 2024-25 Budget Statement C (Health), one connected to a new initiative listed on page 15, and two capital rollovers on page 18, they are:

#### **Recurrent Roll overs**

##### **Expanding investment in suicide prevention and support programs - \$0.354 million**

Activity in 2023-24 has progressed to assess opportunities to improve and fund existing programs and source new programs to fill identified gaps. This rollover funding will be used to trial a new program to expand aftercare approaches in the ACT to establish a targeted program which addresses the unique needs of families and friends supporting someone following a suicide attempt. In addition to this program, the funds will also be used to support other Universal Aftercare Project deliverables following appropriate assessment and decision-making processes.

##### **Expansion of suicide prevention program and mental health support for at risk young adults - \$1.600 million**

The first deliverables for the project (Position Statement and Trauma Informed Training) have been delivered in a highly cost-effective manner. Future deliverables of the project in the second half of 2024 will require this funding (procurement of service provider, location and commencement of service).

The Youth at risk project plans to procure and establish a youth trauma service in 2024-25. This will include significant expenditure including fit out of a building and establishment/commencement of the service in 2024-25.

##### **Strengthening mental health support services for families, adolescents and young children - \$1.391 million**

Extensive market sweep of commercial leasing options identified limited stock for service requirements and subsequently delayed infrastructure expenditure in 2023-24. A location has now been identified but is unlikely to be secured until beginning of 2024-25. Negotiation of commercial lease commenced March 2024. Commercial lease and fit out of service location will proceed in 2024 and support commencement of operation of the service in 2025.

##### **Support early intervention services for eating disorders and perinatal mental health - \$0.567 million**

Delays in accessing data through the Digital Health Record (DHR) has delayed this project. Significant data remediation work is being undertaken, which will now allow progress of this project.

During the course of the project, it has been identified that further consultation and research is required to assess the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women. This was recommended in two independent reports relating to mental health and perinatal mental health. Work has commenced to begin these conversations with a view to go to Market to procure an independent First Nations led research project.

The rolled over funding will provide targeted resources to improve screening rates and service system improvements to support this. This includes training and education packages as well as possible IT infrastructure investment and upgrades. To procure an independent First Nations led research project which will inform future investment and policy approaches to perinatal mental health and wellbeing for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and families. This work meets commitments under the National Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Bilateral Agreement.

### **Capital Roll Overs**

#### **Alcohol & Other Residential Rehab Expansion & Modernisation - \$0.736 million**

In 2023-24, the Karralika Isabella Plains make safe and refurbishment project has been successfully completed. The refurbishment included three onsite accommodation blocks, general repairs and floor replacement in the main facility. The facility is now open for new resident accommodation.

Remaining funding will be used to upgrade the Toora Women site, which is expected to be completed within the 2024-25 financial year as well as early work to design and relocate Arcadia House (run by Directions) from the North Canberra Hospital Site.

The rollover of \$0.736 million from 2022-23 relates to accrued expenditure for the Karralika Isabella Plains expenditure at the end of June 2023, with rollover funding required to cover the delayed invoicing in the 2023-24 financial year.

During 2023-24, further budget reprofiling of \$1.069 million from 2023-24 to 2024-25 occurred as the evolving Northside development project put a hold on the Arcadia house upgrade project scope with relocating of services on the northern block of the NCH campus starting to take shape.

#### **Residential eating disorder treatment centre - \$1.777 million**

Construction of the centre is complete with a Certificate of Occupancy and Use received. The ACT Health Directorate is in the process of handing over the site to Canberra Health Services to commence operations.

The rollover of \$1.777 million from 2022-23 was required due to a prolonged DA process, with funding required in 2023-24 for the continuation of early site works and milestone payments to the construction contractor.

### **New Initiative Related**

#### **Better Care in our community – Housing for Vulnerable People - \$0.228 million**

This roll over relates to a 2023-24 new initiative for the Discharge Accommodation Program (DAP). This approach builds on the findings of the recent MHPS commissioned independent evaluation of the existing DAP program. The evaluation found that while the existing model is not 'contemporary best practice', there is an enduring need for medium term transitional mental health supported accommodation for people exiting inpatient units, to ensure the Canberra Health Services policy of 'no exits into homelessness' is able to be upheld. The evaluation found that DAP is highly underutilised, one reason being a lack of adequate supports to meet the complexity of participant needs in the current model, as well as insufficient supply of long-term housing options for people with mental illness. As recommended by the evaluation, this proposal allows a two year transition period from DAP to Housing Accommodation Support Model (HASI).

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Estimates 2024-2025

Signature: 

Date: 29 July 2024

By the Minister for Mental Health, Emma Davidson MLA