



STANDING COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND COMMUNITY WELLBEING

Mr Johnathan Davis MLA (Chair), Mr James Milligan MLA (Deputy Chair), Mr Michael Petterson MLA

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

Asked by MS **ORR** on 21 February 2022: Minister Davidson took on notice the following question(s):

Ref: Hansard Proof Transcript 21 February 2022, PAGE 39

In relation to: Organisations CSD is engaging with – Carers Recognition Act

I believe Ms Evans said that there is a lot of work going on across directorates and the not-for-profit partners around who is defined as a care and carer support agency. I am happy for you to take this on notice. Is it possible to get a list of who those organisations are?

MS DAVIDSON: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:–

Further work is required to define and identify organisations that are care and carers support agencies under the *Carers Recognition Act 2021* (the Act). However an initial assessment suggests the following organisations may be care and carer support agencies and/or may be able to assist in identifying agencies:

- ACT Government directorates
- Carers ACT
- ACTCOSS (ACT Council of Social Service)
- ACT Together
- ADACAS
- CYCLOPSACT
- Health Care Consumers Association
- COTA ACT
- Advocacy for Inclusion
- Women with Disabilities
- Ethnic Disability ACT
- The Junction Youth Health Service
- Mental Health Coordinating Council
- Mental Health Foundation

The ACT Government will continue to work with Carers ACT to develop and distribute appropriate supporting material about the Act and obligations under the Act to these organisations and more broadly, to increase recognition of carers and their roles in the community.

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

Signature: *Emma Davidson*

Date: 8 March 2022

By the Assistant Minister for Seniors, Veterans, Families and Community Services, Emma Davidson MLA

MS ORR: I have a quick question on the Carers Recognition Act and how that is going, since it was passed in December. I believe that the commencement date is within six months of the bill, or a date set down by the minister. When are you looking to commence the act?

Ms Davidson: Before I hand over to Catherine Rule, who can talk more about the commencement of the act, I want say thank you for your engagement with us during the process of that really important piece of work. It was really great to see that happening.

With the implementation of the Carers Recognition Act, the directorate has been working with some of the organisations that will need to report on that to provide them with things like fact sheets and templates, to make sure that the implementation is as frictionless as possible and that people understand how best they can do that. I will hand over to Catherine, who can talk more about implementation and the time line.

Ms Rule: I will hand over to Jacinta Evans, who can give you some of the information you are after more directly.

Ms Evans: I acknowledge the privilege statement. Thanks, Ms Orr, for your question. As you alluded to, we have to move to implementation within six months. We are progressing that work, and particularly looking to outline the obligations within the act for directorates, or the care and carer support agencies, that will be subject to the act. Those are the government directorates that manage or deliver supports for people in a care relationship or any non-government agency providing support to people in a care relationship.

The obligations, as you noted, are to uphold those care principles in assessing, planning, delivering, managing or reviewing support services, programs and policies in relation to people in care relationships. As the minister said, we are working with directorates to consider what information is required for them to be able to implement and work to those principles under the act. We are working closely with Carers ACT, who are our partner under the ACT carers strategy.

I would like to make particular note of recognition being one of the priorities underpinning the carers strategy. That is a really strong link between the Carers Recognition Act and the strategy. Basically, the bill was passed on 2 December and, as you know, commenced on 10 December; so work is now underway to implement it.

Ms Davidson: The timing of getting that Carers Recognition Act through is so relevant to what carers are experiencing right now with the economic impacts of COVID and the pressures about returning to work. They might still need to stay physically separated from large groups

of people if the person they are caring for is particularly at risk. To have that Carers Recognition Act while people are trying to navigate how we protect those most at risk in our environment, with COVID circulating in the community and balancing that with the return to work recommendation changes, is really important.

MS ORR: Am I right in understanding that the commencement has already happened but you are looking now at how best to make sure that reporting obligations are met by the organisations of care and carer agencies?

Ms Davidson: Yes. We are very much looking at how we can practically support people to make sure that that implementation goes well.

MS ORR: I believe Ms Evans said that there is a lot of work going on across directorates and the not-for-profit partners around who is defined as a care and carer support agency. I am happy for you to take this on notice. Is it possible to get a list of who those organisations are?

Ms Davidson: Yes, we can take that on notice.