



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

SELECT COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES 2022-2023

Mr James Milligan MLA (Chair), Mr Andrew Braddock MLA (Deputy Chair),
Dr Marisa Paterson MLA

ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

MS ELIZABETH KICKERT MLA: To ask the Minister for Health

Ref: Health, Budget Statements C 2022-2023, Output 1.3 Cancer Services, page 38

In relation to: Oncology Ward in Calvary and Canberra Hospital

- 1) How many patients who were receiving cytotoxic or chemotherapy services at Calvary are now receiving this treatment at Canberra Hospital?
 - a) How many of these patients opted to continue receiving this treatment through the private system rather than continuing with the public system?
 - b) When did these services cease being provided at Calvary?
- 2) How many patients who were receiving transfusions other than cytotoxic or chemotherapy were transferred from other hospitals to Calvary hospital to continue receiving their transfusions?
 - a) From which other hospitals were these patients transferred?
- 3) Why was it decided to transfer the cytotoxic and chemotherapy services to Canberra Hospital?
 - a) What was it about the revised standards that indicated that the offering of cytotoxic and chemotherapy services at Calvary was no longer viable long term without significant changes and investment?
 - i) Does the government intend to implement these changes and if so, when and at what cost and if not, why not?
- 4) When did the government become aware that continued cytotoxic and chemotherapy services at Calvary would no longer be viable long term?
 - a) Did Calvary Hospital ever contact the government informing them of this issue before the decision was made to transfer the services?
 - i) If so, when did they contact the government and how many times?
- 5) Will patients who have transferred between hospitals to access the services they need be provided those services for free?

MINISTER STEPHEN-SMITH MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows: –

- 1) As of 29 August 2022, 32 patients have been transferred to the Canberra Region Cancer Centre (CRCC) from the Zita Mary Clinic at Calvary Public Hospital Bruce (CPHB) specifically for cytotoxic or chemotherapy treatments.

It is important to note that this does not include patients who were seen by a medical practitioner at the Zita Mary Clinic and referred for their first and

subsequent treatment at the CRCC, or patients who were referred to the CRCC but had not commenced treatment.

- a) This information is not easily obtainable and it would be unreasonable diversion resources to try to source this information.
 - b) 21 July 2022.
- 2) As of 29 August 2022, 74 patients who commenced non cytotoxic transfusions at the CRCC were transferred for transfusion at CPHB.
- a) The Canberra Hospital.
- 3) In 2020, CPHB reviewed the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care 2020 Guidelines for Medication Management in Cancer Care and advised the ACT Health Directorate (ACTHD) that the hospital would not be able to meet accreditation standards for governance (medical support and comprehensive care) for oncology and haematology services. It was agreed that rectifying the identified gaps would have been resource intensive and some would not be able to be met in the short to medium term. Following consultation, a phased approach to delivering all hospital-based chemotherapy and medical oncology and haematology outpatient services at the CRCC was implemented.
- a) As per above, under the revised standards CPHB would be unable to meet accreditation standards for governance (medical support and comprehensive care) for oncology and haematology services.
 - i) The ACT Health Services Plan 2022-30 commits the Government to undertaking a Northside Clinical Services Plan. This planning work will consider the availability of chemotherapy services in a general context of seeking to improve access to health services for North Canberra residents. This planning work is underway.
- 4) ACTHD raised the issue of the sustainability of chemotherapy at CPHB in November 2020.
- a) Yes. Refer to the answer to 4(a)(i).
 - i) In consultation with CPHB, ACTHD briefed the Minister for Health in November 2020 and May 2021 on proposed changes to chemotherapy service arrangements at CPHB.

- 5) There will be no change to funding arrangements for access to public health services as a result of patients transferring from the Zita Mary Clinic to the CRCC.

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Estimates 2022-2023

Signature:



Date:

11/9/22

By the Minister for Health, Rachel Stephen-Smith MLA