



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

QUESTION ON NOTICE

Elizabeth Kikkert MLA: To ask the Minister for Early Childhood Development

Ref: Budget Statement G, pp. 18, 22 (CSD)

In relation to: CDS and Autism Assessments

Date (Question Lodged by Member): 09/09/2022

Date (Question Sent to DLO): 19/09/2022

- 1. Given that last year the government agreed to ‘increase the likelihood of early diagnosis of ASD by taking steps to increase awareness amongst both parents and professionals’ (Hansard, 24 Nov. 2021, p. 3624), how much of the \$314,000 funding increase in this budget will go to such awareness-increasing steps?**
- 2. What specific steps will the ACT Government take this financial year to increase awareness amongst both parents and professionals with the intent of increasing the likelihood of early diagnosis?**
- 3. What mechanism/s is the government using to track any increases in early diagnosis and/or decreases in late diagnosis in order to measure the effectiveness of its awareness initiatives, and is this measurement/tracking being performed by the CDS or elsewhere in the CSD?**
- 4. Has the measurement/tracking in question 3 required (or will it require) any additional funding to perform, and if so, how much?**
- 5. Given that the targeted hours of service provided to clients of the CDS in this budget show no increase from last year to this year, can the minister explain why utilisation of the CDS is not increasing in line with known population growth?**
- 6. How many autism assessments were provided through CDS each year for the past six financial years?**

9 September 2022

Minister Berry: The answer to the Member’s question is as follows: –

1. This \$314,000 forms part of the total reprofiled amount listed through a technical adjustment (see p. 26, table 20, Statement G – Revised Funding Profile – Child Development Service – Facility Upgrades and Planning).
2. The Child Development Service provides information to parents around early childhood development, information on potential developmental delay flags and information regarding services that can assist families where there are developmental concerns. This information is provided via the CDS website, CDS parent workshops, CDS drop-in clinics and through service requests from other agencies where allied health professionals share early childhood developmental information.

CDS also provides information sessions on the importance of early identification and development assessment referral processes to organisations that may be a point of contact for families who have concerns regarding their children's development, such as Child and Family Centres, Children's Hearing Services, Child Youth Protection Service workers and Maternal and Child Health nurses.

3. CDS offers developmental assessments, referrals, information and linkages for children 0 to 6 and provides free autism assessments for children aged up to 11 years and 11 months. CDS collects data on the services it provides.
4. Please see answer 3.
5. CDS is running at full capacity.
6. The number of autism assessments provided by CDS are as follows:
 - 2021-22 – 128
 - 2020-21 – 133
 - 2019-20 – 71
 - 2018-19 – 101
 - 2017-18 – 67Only 5 years of data is available.

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

Signature:

Date: 19/09/22

By Minister Yvette Berry [Minister for Early Childhood Development]

