



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

SELECT COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES 2023-2024

Mr Mark Parton MLA (Chair), Ms Jo Clay MLA (Deputy Chair),
Mr Michael Pettersson MLA

ANSWER TO QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE DURING PUBLIC HEARINGS

Asked by MS KIKKERT on 21 July 2023: Minister BERRY (Early Child Development) took on notice the following question(s):

Ref: *Uncorrected Hansard Transcript* 21 July 2023 [Page 15]

In relation to:

What is the age breakdown of children on the waitlist for autism assessment?

Ms Summerrell: So, as at 20 July there is 167 families waiting for assessment on autism assessment wait list. And generally families are waiting, you know, between sort of 12 to 13 months for an assessment from the point that they are referred on to our waiting list.

Now, I would say that autism assessment—sorry, to finish the answer to your question around what impact will the recruitment have on that, I mean, obviously huge. Being able to recruit those four positions and provide additional services will make an enormous difference to that wait list.

There was funding as well under the best star initiative for increased telehealth services for autism assessments as well. So, the combination of the two will really increase our capacity to be able to do assessments.

By its very nature autism assessments are sometimes a lengthy process. I am not suggesting by any means 12 to 13 months but there are a series of observations that need to be made in order to get to that diagnosis point. So, that will always still exist as well as the need to be referred into the service and referral pathways in come through a range of ways and once that referral comes in then there are the series of observations that need to be made under the diagnostic tool and the assessment occurs.

MRS KIKKERT: Thank you. And of those—just one file supp please, Chair. Are those 167 families or 167 children?

Ms Summerrell: There are 167 families that are on there.

MRS KIKKERT: Do you mind taking on notice, please, the age of those children who are on the wait list?

Ms Summerrell: So, the age is all under 12. I can get a breakdown on that. I do know that 75 per cent of those on there are male but I can get a breakdown of the specific ages for you.

MRS KIKKERT: That is great. Thank you.

MINISTER BERRY: The answer to the Member's question is as follows: –

The ages of the 167 children on the Autism Assessment waiting list are detailed below. Ages of children have been grouped into a 2-year age range due to small numbers in some single year age groups.

Age	No.
1-2 year olds	13
3-4 year olds	53
5-6 year olds	41
7-8 year olds	31
9-10 year olds	15
11-12 year olds	14

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Estimates 2023-2024

Signature:



Date:

08/08/23

By the Minister for Early Childhood Development, Yvette Berry MLA