



Inquiry into Annual and Financial Reports 2023–2024

Answer to question taken on notice

Asked by: Mr Thomas Emerson MLA

Addressed to: Ms Rachel Stephen-Smith MLA, Minister for Health

In relation to: ACAT Team vacancies

Hearing: 20 February 2025

Uncorrected Proof Transcript p 4

Transcript provided: 27 February 2025

Answer Due: 6 March 2025 5:00PM

Minister for Health took on notice the following question:

Minister Stephen-Smith took on notice the following question:

THE CHAIR: Thank you. I am glad you raised the commonwealth funding. During a senate Estimates hearing last year, evidence was given that you had said the words you have just said now. The ACT had not been getting the funding it needed to provide ACATs. The Department of Health responded by saying that in fact we have been, and that the ACT government had agreed to a remediation plan to increase its performance. What were the details of that remediation plan, and did it include hiring more staff?

Ms Zagari: Yes. We have hired additional staff in order to address the wait time for ACAT, so the ACT government have funded additional staff on top of the commonwealth contribution.

THE CHAIR: Do we have a sense of how long we basically did not have enough staff performing assessments?

Ms Stephen-Smith: I think there are two issues there, Mr Emerson. The first is that as I understand it, there were some vacancies in the ACAT team for a period, so there is that period where there were some vacancies. Subsequently, when you say we did not have enough staff, the commonwealth does not fund enough staff for us to keep up with demand. We now have some additional ACT government funded staff as well, so I think we can take on notice the period during which there were vacancies and how many vacancies there were in the commonwealth funded team.

MINISTER FOR HEALTH: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

There have been no ongoing vacancies within the Aged Care Assessment Team (ACAT). Short-term vacancies have arisen from time to time due to attrition, recruitment and onboarding of new team members. These positions have been promptly filled to maintain operational continuity and ensure uninterrupted service delivery to the greatest extent possible.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Social Policy

Signature:



Date:

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By the Minister for Health, Rachel Stephen-Smith