

2004

THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR
THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

Standing Committee on Health

Report 7

2002-2003 Annual and Financial Reports: ACT
Health Community and Health Services Complaints
Commissioner, Healthpact - December 2003

1 July 2004

Tabled by
Jon Stanhope MLA
Chief Minister

Government Response

Report 7 - Standing Committee on Health 2002-2003 Annual and Financial Reports: ACT Health Community and Health Services Complaints Commissioner, Healthpact - December 2003

Introduction

The Annual Reports of all ACT Government agencies are referred to the Standing Committees of the ACT Legislative Assembly for examination and report.

The Standing Committee on Health reviewed annual reports for:

- ACT Health;
- Community and Health Services Complaints Commissioner; and
- Healthpact.

The Committee makes 10 recommendations.

Response to Committee Recommendations

Recommendation 1

2.5 The Committee recommends that agencies ensure that appropriate attention is paid to the development of and adherence to the Annual Report Directions

Government Response

Agreed.

Recommendation 2

2.9 The Committee recommends that future annual reports be professionally edited to ensure consistency and accessibility.

Government Response

Noted. If responsibility for editing was outsourced to a professional editor, increased cost and timing implications would need to be considered. The Communications and Marketing Unit within ACT Health has advised that it may be able to provide this service in-house. Further consideration of the implications of this recommendation will be required prior to a decision being made regarding outsourcing.

Recommendation 3

2.16 The Committee recommends that, in future, ACT Health improve its reporting on 'Legislative Assembly Inquiries and Reports' by including a table listing the agreed recommendation, the Government response and any action taken towards implementing the recommendation.

Government Response

Agreed. ACT Health will provide the relevant information in future Annual Reports.

Recommendation 4

2.28 The Committee recommends that the Government forward the new suite of performance indicators for ACT Health to the Standing Committee on Health when finalised.

Government Response

Noted. ACT Health has reviewed and revised some of its performance measures for 2004-2005 and will continue to refine the measures to provide the most appropriate indicators. The revised suite of performance indicators for ACT Health can be found in the 2004-2005 budget papers.

ACT Health will ensure that any future changes to measures and targets are provided to the Committee at the earliest opportunity.

Recommendation 5

The Committee recommends that the Government ensure that the new ACT Health performance measures are implemented in time for the 2004-2005 budget and that these measures are used in conjunction with the existing measures in the 2003-2004 annual report.

Government Response

Noted. ACT Health reviewed its measures and changed several in the Mental Health and Community Services' outputs. Measures and targets have been in some cases deleted, amended or increased. The aim is to provide more meaningful and effective measures and targets. These revised targets are reflected in the 2004-2005 budget papers and will be reported on throughout 2004-2005 and in the 2004-2005 Annual Report.

Recommendation 6

The Committee recommends that annual reports include clear links to output classes and provide fuller details of performance measures that are otherwise not self-explanatory.

Government Response

Agreed.

Recommendation 7

2.38 The Committee recommends that the Government, in its contract with the Little Company of Mary, require the production of an annual report on the public operations of Calvary Hospital to coincide with the reporting timetable as defined by the Chief Minister's Annual Report Directions.

Government Response

Agreed in principle. Calvary Hospital is run by the Little Company of Mary, not the ACT Government. The Government cannot force LCM to produce a report.

However, Government recognises that Calvary Hospital is a major player in the ACT public health system and is in receipt of considerable public funds for which it must be accountable. The ACT Health annual report will be so designed to ensure that Calvary Hospital outputs and key deliverables, as indicated in the Budget papers, are properly and fully reported. Calvary Hospital has agreed to work with ACT Health to ensure this is satisfactorily achieved.

Recommendation 8

2.48 The Committee recommends that in future annual reports, ACT Health report more fully on the nature and resolution of complaints, acknowledging that complaints are important to inform service improvement and are part of an agency's external scrutiny.

Government Response

Agreed. ACT Health will address this concern when finalising the 2003-2004 Annual Report for publication.

Recommendation 9

3.9 The Committee recommends that, wherever possible, public authorities with significant responsibilities to staff employed under the *Public Sector Management Act 1994* adhere to the requirements of the Annual Report Directions, particularly those matters relating to staffing.

Government Response

Agreed. Public authorities with significant responsibilities to staff employed under the *Public Sector Management Act 1994* will be made aware of the requirements of the Annual Report Directions as recommended by the Committee.

Recommendation 10

3.14 The Committee recommends that Healthpact develop more appropriate performance indicators in order to more accurately measure the effectiveness and efficiency of the agency.

Government Response

Agreed. Healthpact are currently developing their 2005-2008 Strategic Plan and reviewing the Board's Ends policies which will have stronger performance indicators for the Secretariat to report.