



## Standing Committee on Public Accounts

### **Inquiry into Appropriation 2022-2022 (No 2) and Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) 2022-2022 (No 2)** **ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE**

#### **Ms Castley MLA to ask the Treasurer**

Ref: Budget review 2022-23

1. In relation to the Wellbeing and Recovery Fund to support the ACT public health services workforce, what specific outputs and activities will be undertaken at a cost \$8.750 million over 4 years, and what will each cost over the quadrennium?
2. How have the Offset – Expenses, totalling \$1.375 million over 4 years been estimated?
3. Where is the \$7.375m Offset – Health Funding Envelope over 4 years coming from? Will it come from savings: if so what savings? If not, where will it come from?

#### **Mr Barr MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:–**

1. The Wellbeing and Recovery Fund is designed to fund recruitment, retention, and initial recovery activities for the health workforce in ACT public health services, to support staff wellbeing and healthy workplaces. Funding is for:
  - a flexible Wellbeing Fund for individual teams across ACT public health services to propose initiatives that will support wellbeing, a healthy workplace and recruitment and retention; and
  - co-designed organisation and Territory-wide activities to support wellbeing, recruitment, retention, and recovery of ACT public health services workforces.

The four-year Wellbeing and Recovery program aims to support the wellbeing of the ACT health workforce in the short-term as they recover from the COVID-19 pandemic and current increased demand, and in the longer term, strengthen the workplace environments and capacity of the health workforce by attracting and retaining staff in a highly competitive labour market.

There was agreement by the organisation executives (ACT Health Directorate, Canberra Health Services and Calvary Public Hospital Bruce) that the approach would:

- Focus on the immediate need for recovery, and that this will vary across work areas and organisations within the ACT public health system and requires input from staff. Funding will adjust over the course of the four-year program.
- Focus on recovery for the first year of the program. The next three years will move beyond recovery to embed wellbeing improvement and rolling recruitment, retention, and Learning

and Development (potentially including training focused on leadership, systems-thinking, and data competency). This may include the development of initiatives such as streamlining recruitment processes, working with tertiary institutions to harness local student resources, promoting the benefits of living and working in the ACT, and promoting the ACT health system as a learning health system. Funding is also included for a coordinated attraction and recruitment program across the health sector led by the ACT Health Directorate, which is currently underway.

- Include a mix of funding allocations to support wellbeing in each organisation and co-design initiatives which can be either system wide or allocated by organisation.

Year 1 funding will include:

- for each organisation, internal initiatives developed by teams for teams;
- investment into the Nursing and Midwifery Recruitment Campaign on behalf of the three organisations;
- investment to progress additional cohorts of the established level 1 leadership development training for the three organisations; and
- investment into organisation-wide initiatives to ensure a focus of wellbeing and recovery for the workforce.

Years 2-4 funding will include:

- continued investment in leadership development training to build upon the level 1 training initiated through the Culture Review program;
  - a Flexible Wellbeing Fund for internal initiatives;
  - operationalising a targeted approach by the organisation executives to co-design Initiatives for systemwide approaches as agreed in the Systemwide People Governance Forum; and
  - co-design initiatives that may be deployed at an organisational level or a whole-of-system level. The Third Annual Review of the Culture Review Implementation Program will highlight the value of systemwide initiatives to support the sustainment of a positive workplace culture, such as systemwide leadership and mentoring programs and the allocation of appropriate funding and effort from the three organisations.
2. The offsets relate to the reprioritisation of existing ACT Health Directorate resourcing, as detailed in the response to Question on Notice No. 13.
  3. The Health Funding Envelope is used to provide funding certainty across the health portfolio, regardless of other sources of revenue. Decisions taken on how the envelope is allocated across the portfolio are taken through the Budget and represent allocation of growth funding to specific initiatives.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Public Accounts

Signature: 

Date: 16. 3. 23

By the Treasurer, Mr Barr MLA