



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

SELECT COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES 2024-2025

Ms Nichole Lawder MLA (Chair) Ms Suzane Orr MLA (Deputy Chair) Miss
Laura Nuttall MLA (Member)

Appropriation Bill 2024-2025 and Appropriation (Office of the Legislative
Assembly) Bill 2024-2025

Question on Notice (Committee)

Asked by: Ms Leanne Castley MLA

Addressed to: Minister for Health

Reference: Health – Elective Surgeries

Date: 25/07/2024

In relation to: Canberra Health Services and Paediatric and elective surgery wait times

Question Lodgement Date: 25/07/2024

Date Answer Due: 02/08/2024

Question

Labor promised 60,000 elective surgeries over 4 years.

- 1) Will it meet that promise?
- 2) In the past CHS has contracted out elective surgeries to private hospitals but had them performed by CHS specialists.
 - a) Has this now changed? If so, when?
 - b) Are these surgeries, like 300 cataract operations being done in partnership with private facilities being done in bulk, or on an ad hoc basis?
 - c) Are they being done by private specialists or CHS specialists and VMOs. (The Government has committed to deliver an additional 300 cataract surgeries through partnerships with private facilities.)

MS STEPHEN-SMITH: The answer to the Member's question is as follows: –

- 1) This question was answered in the *Select Committee on Estimates 2024-2025* Uncorrected Hansard Transcript [p 23 - 24].
- 2)
 - a. No, it has not changed. The majority of the public elective surgery undertaken in private hospitals during 2023-24 was performed by CHS specialists. Less than 10 cases were contracted out to a Sydney hospital and specialist in March and April 2024. This arrangement was terminated due to the unavailability of appropriate specialists at that hospital.

- b. In 2023-24, cataract cases were undertaken at the four private hospitals that do cataract surgery. This relates to the specialist's hospital preference and theatre availability. Not all Eye Specialists are accredited at all four hospitals. CHS is considering bulk purchases in the future if an agreement can be reached with all specialists. The 300 cataract cases announced as a 2024-25 commitment will be contracted using the existing mechanism.

A similar approach is adopted for other public elective surgery in private hospitals. These are based on a surgeon's preference and theatre availability and the hospital's scope of clinical services, with the exception of joint surgery which is contracted as a defined number of cases per annum from the preferred private hospital provider.

Wherever practicable, ad hoc lists are avoided due to lack of anaesthetic availability at short notice.

- c. Currently, CHS runs three regular public-in-private hospital cataract lists per month. These cases are all undertaken by CHS Eye Specialists.

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Estimates 2024-2025

Signature:



Date:

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By Ms Rachel Stephen-Smith Minister for Health