

2024

**THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE
AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY**

TENTH ASSEMBLY

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND COMMUNITY WELLBEING –
REPORT 12 - INQUIRY INTO ANNUAL AND FINANCIAL REPORTS 2022-23**

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

**Presented by
Andrew Barr MLA
Chief Minister
August 2024**

Introduction

On 11 February 2021, the Legislative Assembly passed an amendment to the 2 December 2020 Resolution of Establishment (clause 3) referring the Annual and Financial Reports to the relevant Standing Committee for inquiry and report by 9 April of the year after the presentation of the report to the Assembly pursuant to the *Annual Reports (Government Agencies) Act 2004*.

The 2022-2023 Annual and Financial Reports were reviewed by the relevant Standing Committees, and each Committee held hearings and reported separately. The below Government Response addresses the recommendations within the report from the Standing Committee on Health and Community Wellbeing.

The following Annual and Financial Reports or sections of annual reports, were referred to the Standing Committee on Health and Community Wellbeing:

- ACT Health Directorate;
- Canberra Health Services; and
- Community Services Directorate.

Standing Committee on Health and Community Wellbeing – Report 12 - Inquiry into Annual and Financial Reports 2022-23

RECOMMENDATION	GOVERNMENT RESPONSE
<p>Recommendation 1 The committee recommends that ACT Government consult with midwives about any operational problems in accessing Syntocinon and report how many orders have been signed by Obstetrics and Gynaecology Consultants for Syntocinon since July 2023.</p>	<p>AGREED The Government agrees to consult with midwives in the homebirth program to understand and mitigate any operational problems in accessing Syntocinon for home births.</p> <p>There have been 21 orders signed by Obstetrics and Gynaecology consultants for Syntocinon since July 2023.</p>
<p>Recommendation 2 The committee recommends that the ACT Government report regularly on how many emergency room presentations arise from dental issues.</p>	<p>AGREED IN-PRINCIPLE Prior to implementing reporting, the ACT Health Directorate will, in collaboration with Canberra Health Services, undertake a program of work to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify the scope and availability of relevant data; • assess and document data quality; • establish methodologies for reporting including consideration of performance and activity metrics and reach agreement on these with relevant stakeholders; • identify an appropriate reporting mechanism including considerations of frequency, reporting platform and data accessibility.
<p>Recommendation 3 The committee recommends the ACT Government increase funding for safe havens and peer workers.</p>	<p>AGREED IN-PRINCIPLE The ACT Government is continuing to support Safe Haven services in the ACT, including the current work to establish the hospital based Safe Haven, in close consultation with Canberra Health Services, people with lived experience and peak bodies.</p> <p>The ACT Government is also continuing to support sector readiness and increase access, training, and opportunities for peer workers in the ACT, such as through the 2023 funding of the Peer Worker Scholarship program (with Commonwealth funding) and the establishment of a Director Lived Experience in the Office for Mental Health and Wellbeing. Ongoing work is also continuing in-line with the <i>ACT Mental Health Workforce Strategy; Framework for Change and 2024 Work Plan</i> and the <i>Office for Mental Health and Wellbeing Work Plan 2023-2024</i>.</p>

RECOMMENDATION	GOVERNMENT RESPONSE
	<p>Mental Health, Justice Health and Alcohol & Drug Services (MHJHADS) acknowledges the important role people with lived experience have in the delivery of person-centred care. MHJHADS are committed to strengthening their lived experience/peer workforce and are considering what internal resourcing may be available to support this enhancement.</p> <p>Increased funding beyond what is currently forecast would be subject to consideration via future budget processes.</p>
<p>Recommendation 4 The committee recommends that the ACT Government consider whether it can locally support links between on-the-ground food rescue and second-hand and refurbished goods and the community services who need them.</p>	<p>AGREED Feedback from Emergency and Financial Relief providers indicates that refurbished goods, particularly whitegoods, are hard to acquire and are in high demand.</p> <p>The ACT Government agrees links between food rescue and access to second hand and refurbished goods can be considered when the Community Development Program, which funds food rescue and Emergency and Financial Relief provers, undergoes a commissioning cycle in the next two years.</p>
<p>Recommendation 5 The committee recommends the ACT Government provide clear information about whether and where it will rehome all 46 former public housing residents of East Lake.</p>	<p>AGREED Housing ACT will take an individualised and person-centred approach to engagement with public housing tenants who currently live in East Lake.</p> <p>This will include work with the ACT Office for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs (OATSIA) to consider how best to undertake a culturally informed approach to engagement with tenants.</p>