



Inquiry into Annual and Financial Reports 2023–2024

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Ms Chiaka Barry MLA

Addressed to: Minister for Health

Reference: Health

Hearing: 20 February 2025

In relation to: Disability Access

Question received: 24 February 2025

Answer Due: 3 March 2025

- 1) Can you tell me how the establishment of a disability health literacy program is going? Please outline the key outcomes and delivery dates.
- 2) Can you tell me how you are progressing on the accessibility audit of facilities leased or owned by ACT public healthcare services, and any consultation with disability communities? Please outline the methodology and timeframe of the audit.
- 3) I note you will develop an accessibility improvement plan for facilities. Is this being developed concurrently with the audit? Will this be published? Please provide the methodology for this project and timeframes.
- 4) Do you have current funding to remediate any accessibility issues identified, if not, how would this funding be sought?
- 5) I note the development of a disability health supported decision-making framework. What is the purpose and intent of this framework? How would use of the framework be initiated?
- 6) I note you intend to scope and model a disability health case management and referral service for the ACT. Is this a new function or a reference to the Integrated Service Response Program?
- 7) Can you tell me how that work is progressing?

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

- 1) Implementation of a disability health literacy program is an action under the Disability Health Strategy First Action Plan 2024-2026. As a first step, the Health Care Consumers' Association (HCCA) has been engaged to understand the health literacy needs of people with disability and those that support them. This project is due to be completed by the end of August 2025.
- 2) The accessibility audit of Canberra Health Services (CHS) facilities was completed in December 2023. North Canberra Hospital (NCH) and Clare Holland House were not included in

this package of works as the project was established prior to the amalgamation of CHS and Calvary Public Hospital Bruce. NCH has since conducted an accessibility audit of its facilities.

The accessibility audit was undertaken by a specialist *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (DDA) consultant to review CHS facilities against relevant Australian Standards, National Construction Code and the DDA.

CHS facilities were progressively inspected over a six-month period, with a detailed report provided for each facility. A single summarised report was also provided encompassing findings across all CHS facilities.

The summary audit report was shared and consulted with the HCCA and the CHS Disability Network.

- 3) An improvement strategy has been developed based on the findings of the accessibility audit report. The audit report categorised actions as high, medium or low for the purpose of triaging actions and focus of remediation activities.
 - a. Remediation of high priority actions is in progress, with CHS actions scheduled to be closed out by the end of 2025.
 - b. Medium and low actions will be included in asset renewal projects where there is a direct overlap with asset renewal project scope. This will enable progressive close out of a portion of actions within existing funding and resourcing constraints.

A consumer insights project with HCCA 'First Impressions Assessment' was undertaken in 2024, to provide strategic direction on critical consumer issues in accessing CHS facilities. The project assisted in the identification of priority consumer accessibility issues requiring urgent rectifications. Clear and accessible signage and wayfinding in CHS facilities was consistently identified by consumers as requiring improvement. CHS has recently implemented new external wayfinding to assist with consumer navigation around the Canberra Hospital campus.

- 4) The ACT Health Directorate is funded for the maintenance and upgrade of its facilities through the ACT Budget.

Further funding that may be required to remediate accessibility issues can be accessed through:

- a. The Asset Renewal Program, which provides an annual funding pool for works that extend the useful life or improve the service delivery capacity of existing infrastructure.
 - b. Asset Repairs and Maintenance funding.
 - c. Development of a Budget Business Case.
- 5) A disability health supported decision-making framework will outline how people with disability should be supported when making decisions about their health. The purpose of the framework is to enable people with disability to be at the centre of their own decisions. How this framework will be used will be considered as part of the development of the framework.

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Scoping and modelling of a disability health case management and referral service is a new initiative under the Disability Health Strategy First Action Plan 2024-2026. How this will look in practice is yet to be determined and will be dependent upon the scoping/modelling aspect of the project. This service is not related to the Integrated Service Response Program (ISRP). ISRP is not a disability health management and referral service.

- 6) Scoping and modelling of a disability health case management and referral service is anticipated to commence before the end of 2026, in line with the timing for the First Action Plan.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Social Policy

Signature:



Date:

3/3/25

By the Minister for Health, Rachel Stephen-Smith