



Inquiry into Appropriation Bill 2026–2027 and Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2026–2027

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: MR THOMAS EMERSON MLA

Addressed to: MINISTER PATERSON

Reference: Canberra Health Services

Hearing: **29 July 2026**

In relation to: Reproductive rights

Question received: **31 July 2026**

Answer Due: **13 August 2026**

- 1) Is there a plan to provide miscarriage doulas who can advocate for patients and escalate care if needed, to provide support and advocacy – eg. to ensure women are getting enough pain relief, liaise with the OB GYN team to see if further tests can be done to confirm threatened miscarriage diagnoses or identify causes, acquire referrals to the Early Pregnancy Unit etc and so on – when families and women are in such illness, physical pain, suffering and distress they cannot advocate for themselves?
- 2) Many studies have demonstrated that "tender loving care" – a system of weekly appointments with empathic clinicians offering increased monitoring, testing and support – has been shown to positively impact pregnancy outcomes during subsequent pregnancies in women with recurrent pregnancy loss. Is there a plan to implement such a healthcare structure of "tender loving care" for women in the ACT seeking to access their reproductive rights?

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

- 1) There are currently no plans to introduce miscarriage doulas as part of Canberra Health Services (CHS).
- 2) ACT Government recognises the significant emotional and psychological impact that recurrent pregnancy loss can have on women, pregnant people and their families. CHS already provides a range of services through specialist obstetric, gynaecological and early pregnancy care pathways, including assessment, monitoring, counselling, investigation and referral where clinically appropriate.

There are no plans to establish a dedicated service specifically modelled as a "Tender Loving Care" program. The principles underpinning such approaches, including compassionate care, continuity of care, appropriate clinical monitoring, and multidisciplinary support, are reflected in existing services and models of care delivered by CHS.

ACT Government continues to review services and models of care to ensure women and pregnant people experiencing early pregnancy complications or pregnancy loss receive safe,

evidence-based and person-centred care that meets their clinical and emotional support needs.

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Estimates 2026–2027

Signature: 
By the Minister for Health, Dr Marisa Paterson MLA

Date: 14/8/26