

REPORT 6

**ACT Health**

**Response to recommendations  
on the**

**Standing Committee on Health**

**Report on recent reports concerning the mental health system  
October 2003**

**December 2003**

11 FEB 2004

## STANDING COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

### Report on recent reports concerning the mental health system

#### Report 6

In its report tabled in the Legislative Assembly in October 2003, the Standing Committee on Health recommended that the Government provide quarterly reports to the Committee on the following reports:

- Community and Health Services Complaints Commissioner report entitled: *Investigation into risk of harm to clients of mental health services* (November 2002); and
- *Review of the design and operation of the psychiatry services unit (PSU), Canberra Hospital, December 2002 – January 2003.*

#### Response to Recommendations

- *Community and Health Services Complaints Commissioner report entitled: Investigation into risk of harm to clients of mental health services – the Patterson Report (November 2002)*

**Agreed.** The Government will agree to brief the Standing Committee on the Patterson Report at three monthly intervals.

The Community and Health Services Complaints Commissioner report on the Investigation into risk of harm to clients of mental health services was tabled in the Legislative Assembly in November 2002. When tabling the Patterson report, the Government accepted all the recommendations and the then Minister for Health made a commitment to providing the Assembly with a progress report on the implementation of the recommendations in December 2003.

Mental Health ACT has made significant progress on a significant number of the recommendations from the Patterson Review, including completing the review of the Psychiatric Services Unit (Mann/LaRoche Report) and changes to processes to develop a more client centred approach and enhance opportunities for clients and carers to be involved in strategic and operational aspects of the service.

In response to one of the major recommendations of the review, the Mental Health Strategy and Action Plan is nearing completion after an extensive consultation period. The Strategy and Action Plan will provide the framework for a whole of territory population health model and identify priorities for mental health in the ACT for the next five years.

An interim report on the status of the Mental Health ACT response to the Patterson report to 30 June 2003 is at Attachment 3.

The Government will provide a further report as agreed in December 2003.

- *Review of the design and operation of the psychiatry services unit (PSU), Canberra Hospital, December 2002 – January 2003*

**Agreed.** The Government will agree to brief the Standing Committee on the Mann/LaRoche Report at three monthly intervals.

A Review of the design and operation of the PSU, was commissioned and undertaken over December 2002- January 2003 period by Ms Kerrie La Roche, Nurse Unit Manager-Inpatient Psychiatry, Monash Medical Centre, Melbourne and Mr Rod Mann, Associate Director of Nursing- Psychiatry, The Alfred, Melbourne.

The review focused on specific concerns regarding the design and operation of the PSU identified through the Complaints Commissioner inquiries, and recent Coronial Inquiries. It was also asked to provide a general assessment of the design and operational issues of the PSU, and make recommendations regarding changes to design and operational practice

The Mann- LaRoche Report recommendations fall into two groupings – Infrastructure, and Operational issues, relating to Clinical Care. A number of the recommendations in relation to operational issues reinforce those in the Patterson report.

The final report on the Mann/LaRoche review was tabled in May 2003. The Government has accepted all recommendations from the Mann/LaRoche report and has commenced work on implementing the recommended changes to the structure and operation of the PSU.

The majority of the recommendations from the from the Mann/LaRoche relating to operational issues have already been implemented.

Recommendations in relation to the design and structure of the PSU are also being addressed on a priority basis. Work has commenced on the modifications to the outdoor areas of the PSU and plans have been drawn for changes to the design of the nurses' station and seclusion rooms.

ACT Health has commissioned a further review of the fire safety aspects of the PSU, which will provide advice about the cost associated with retro-fitting the facility with sprinklers as recommended in the Mann/LaRoche Report.

The requirement to seek building approvals and contract the work to occur with minimal disruption to consumers is likely to mean that progress on the structural modifications of the PSU will occur over a longer period of time.

An interim report on the status of the response to the Mann/LaRoche report to September 2003 is at Attachment 4.

