



## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

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### SELECT COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES 2022-2023

Mr James Milligan MLA (Chair), Mr Andrew Braddock MLA (Deputy Chair),  
Dr Marisa Paterson MLA

### ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

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**MS LEANNE CASTLEY MLA:** To ask the Minister for Health

Ref: Health, ACT Health

In relation to: Paediatric and elective surgery wait times

Could the Minister provide updated answers for the following questions for ALL types of waiting lists (Including but not limited to Ambulatory care lists)

- (1) How many children are on waiting lists for an initial appointment for children's health services in the ACT?
- (2) For each service referred to in question (1), what is the median wait time for each, for the years (a) 2020-21 and (b) 2021-22?
- (3) How many children have been added to wait lists each year for children's health services in the ACT since 2016?
- (4) What is the median wait time for children to be removed from wait lists in the ACT for each service since 2016?
- (5) How many Canberrans are on wait lists for an initial appointment for elective surgery in the ACT for each service?
- (6) How many people from other states and territories are on waiting lists for an initial appointment for all wait lists in elective surgery in the ACT for each service?
- (7) What is the median wait time for Canberrans to be removed for an initial appointment for all elective surgery wait lists, each year, since 2016?
- (8) What is the median wait time for patients from other states and territories to be removed for an initial appointment for wait lists for elective surgery, each year, since 2016?
- (9) What is the total median wait time for individuals to be removed for an initial appointment for wait lists for elective surgery, each year, since 2016?
- (10) How many Canberrans have been added to wait lists each year for elective surgery in the ACT since 2016?
- (11) How many patients from other states and territories have been added to wait lists each year for elective surgery in the ACT since 2016?
- (12) What is the median wait time for Canberrans to be removed from wait lists in the ACT for each category of elective surgery, each year since 2016?
- (13) What is the median wait time for people from other states and territories to be removed from wait lists in the ACT for each category of elective surgery, each year since 2016?

(14) What is the median wait time for patients to be removed from wait lists for reasons other than surgery since 2016?

**MINISTER STEPHEN-SMITH MLA:** The answer to the Member’s question is as follows: –

- (1) All children waiting for a first appointment sit within the ambulatory care wait list. On 30 June 2022 there were 2,477 paediatric patients aged 16 years or less on waiting lists for an initial appointment for a paediatric specialty.
- (2) The median wait time in days for the paediatric specialties within the Division of Women, Youth and Children and the paediatric specialty within the Division of Surgery are outlined in the following table.

Service	2020-21	2021-22
Children Youth and Women	413	186
Paediatrics	246	147
Paediatric Surgery	271	173

- (3) The following table provides information about the number of paediatric patients added to an outpatient waiting list by financial year for a dedicated paediatric specialty.

Speciality	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Total	1,370	1,477	1,759	1,993	2,106	2,361

*Note: waitlists are dynamic and change daily*

The following table provides information about the number of paediatric patients added to an elective surgery waiting list by financial year for a dedicated paediatric specialty.

Speciality	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Total	1,648	1,796	1,585	1,643	1,349	1,295

*Note: waitlists are dynamic and change daily*

- (4) The following table provides information about the median waiting time in days for paediatric patients to be removed for initial appointment from any outpatient waiting list by speciality by financial year.

<b>Specialty</b>	<b>2016-17</b>	<b>2017-18</b>	<b>2018-19</b>	<b>2019-20</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>2021-22</b>
Audiologist	N/A	49.5	176	N/A	N/A	N/A
Cardiology	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	353	89
CYW Child Medical Officer	97	113	138.5	92	N/A	N/A
CYW Paediatric Registrar	N/A	117.5	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
CYW Paediatrician	308	199.5	234.5	262.5	385	188
Dermatology	154.5	65	92	79	105.5	116
Ear, Nose and Throat	599.5	363	390.5	471	279	172
Endocrinology	214	126.5	63.5	183	29	105
Exercise Physiology	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	48	N/A
Gastroenterology	77	77	23	123.5	51	56
General Surgery	160	83.5	237	137	111	N/A
Gynaecology	111	66.5	115.5	171.5	283	123
Head and Neck Surgery	N/A	97	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Immunology	89	273	111	110.5	214	194
Neurology	220	46	147	173	133	134
Neurosurgery	65.5	14	291	121	82	N/A
Ophthalmology	88	90.5	117.5	319	414.5	1060
Oral-Maxillofacial Surgery	202	220	93	48.5	51	29
Orthopaedic Surgery	182	87	87	59	563	87
Paediatric Surgery	392	303	157	125.5	62	161
Paediatrics	60	63	83	113	102	147
Physiotherapy	177.5	357	68.5	1322	15	24
Plastic Surgery	71	52	59.5	95.5	81	77
Play Therapist	N/A	N/A	N/A	6	N/A	N/A

<b>Specialty</b>	<b>2016-17</b>	<b>2017-18</b>	<b>2018-19</b>	<b>2019-20</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>2021-22</b>
Psychology	85	20	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Registered Nurse	301	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Registrar	N/A	N/A	N/A	159.5	575	N/A
Respiratory	6	N/A	N/A	30	170	N/A
Rheumatology	N/A	102	191.5	216	47	70
Urology	131	N/A	133.5	77	N/A	72
Vascular	138.5	127	N/A	28.5	78.5	20

The following table provides information about the median waiting time in days for paediatric patients to be removed from an elective surgery waiting list by speciality by financial year.

<b>Specialty</b>	<b>2016-17</b>	<b>2017-18</b>	<b>2018-19</b>	<b>2019-20</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>2021-22</b>
Ear, Nose and Throat	117	281	225	226	362	217
General Surgery	31	112	16	106	13	11
Gynaecological Oncology	N/A	N/A	64	N/A	N/A	N/A
Gynaecology	34	37	22	82	28	35
Head and Neck Surgery	42	112	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Neurosurgery	N/A	N/A	N/A	7	N/A	27
Obstetrics	1	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Ophthalmology	70	15	27	24	5	15
Oral Surgery	150	287	209	84	209	133
Oral-Maxillofacial Surgery	48	55	91	101	108	91
Orthopaedic Surgery	28	35	19	16	25	40
Paediatric Surgery	41	73	72	92	117	97
Paediatrics	2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	18
Physiotherapy	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	14

Specialty	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Plastic Surgery	4	7	14	21	10	13
Thoracic Surgery	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	2	N/A
Urology	76	118	30	N/A	63	35
Vascular	N/A	N/A	7	15	24	4

- (5) Patients attend outpatient appointments for many reasons and not all patients are then referred to a list for an appointment for elective surgery – some patients are treated through conservative management measures. The level of data granularity required to provide “initial elective surgery only appointments” require too higher resourcing to be able to refine this answer and initial appointments for surgical outpatients is given instead. Accordingly, to provide a more detailed response to this item will be an unreasonable diversion of resources.

The conversion rate to surgery from referrals varies across specialties and triage categories and is as low as 25 per cent for some groups.

Patients are seen for initial appointments across a range of settings including public and private facilities and the ACT Government does not have visibility of settings beyond public health services.

As of 30 June 2022, there were 12,664 referrals for an initial appointment for specialties that feed into the service that provides elective surgery at Canberra Health Services (CHS), but as above these will not all be for elective surgery.

The level of data granularity required to provide equivalent details for Calvary Public Hospital Bruce (CPHB) is unavailable. Accordingly, to provide a response to this item for CPHB would be an unreasonable diversion of resources.

- (6) As above, not all patients are on a list for an appointment for elective surgery and the ACT Government does not have visibility across the range of settings in which an initial appointment may occur. The level of data granularity required to provide “initial elective surgery only appointments” require too higher resourcing to be able to refine this answer and initial appointments for surgical outpatients is given instead. Accordingly, to provide a more detailed response to this item will be an unreasonable diversion of resources.

As of 30 June 2022, there were 4,324 referrals for an initial appointment for an interstate person for specialties that feed into the service that provides elective surgery at CHS, as above these will not all be for elective surgery. This is in keeping with long-term trends where approximately 25 to 33 per cent of elective activity is generated from interstate patients. It should be noted that many interstate patients actually see their doctor within the ACT, and work within the ACT. Canberra Hospital is the tertiary hospital for the region.

The level of data granularity required to provide equivalent details for CPHB is unavailable. Accordingly, to provide a response to this item for CPHB would be an unreasonable diversion of resources.

- (7) Not all patients on a list for an appointment are for elective surgery. The level of data granularity required to provide “initial elective surgery only appointments” require too higher resourcing to be able to refine this answer and initial appointments for surgical outpatients is given instead. Accordingly, to provide a more detailed response to this item will be an unreasonable diversion of resources.

The following table outlines the median time in days for patients to be removed for an initial appointment from CHS Ambulatory Care wait list from 1 January 2016 to 30 June 2022.

Year	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022 to 30 June
Median	132	97	105	94	112	107	81

- (8) As above, not all patients on a waitlist for a first appointment will require elective surgery and the ACT Government does not have visibility across the range of settings in which an initial appointment may occur. The level of data granularity required to provide “initial elective surgery only appointments” require too higher resourcing to be able to refine this answer and initial appointments for surgical outpatients is given instead. Accordingly, to provide a more detailed response to this item will be an unreasonable diversion of resources.

The level of data granularity required to provide equivalent details for CPHB is unavailable. Accordingly, to provide a response to this item for CPHB would be an unreasonable diversion of resources.

The following table outlines the median time in days for interstate patients to be removed for an initial appointment from CHS Ambulatory Care wait list up from 1 January 2016 to 30 June 2022.

Year	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022 to 30 June
Median	120	86	90	87	105	104	81

- (9) As above, not all patients on a waitlist for a first appointment will require elective surgery and the ACT Government does not have visibility across the range of settings in which an initial appointment may occur. The level of data granularity required to provide “initial elective surgery only appointments” require too higher resourcing to be able to refine this answer and initial appointments for surgical outpatients is given

instead. Accordingly, to provide a more detailed response to this item will be an unreasonable diversion of resources.

The level of data granularity required to provide equivalent details for CPHB is unavailable. Accordingly, to provide a response to this item for CPHB would be an unreasonable diversion of resources.

The following table outlines the median time in days for “all” (=total) patients to be removed for an initial appointment from CHS Ambulatory Care wait list up from 1 January 2016 to 30 June 2022.

<b>Year</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022 to 30 June</b>
Median	98	118	143	113	137	96	81

(10) The following table outlines the number of Canberra patients added to the Elective Surgery Wait List in the ACT from 1 January 2016 to 30 June 2022.

These figures reflect patients listed for public procedures performed in the ACT, noting that surgeries are undertaken across both public and private hospitals.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Number of Canberrans added</b>
2016	10,593
2017	11,069
2018	11,303
2019	11,460
2020	10,713
2021	12,118
2022	5,654 to 30 June 2022

- (11) The following table outlines the number of interstate patients added to the Elective Surgery Wait List in the ACT from 1 January 2016 to 30 June 2022. These figures reflect patients listed for public procedures performed in the ACT, noting that surgeries are undertaken across both public and private hospitals.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Number of interstate residents added</b>
2016	4,707
2017	4,664
2018	4,844
2019	5,350
2020	4,934
2021	5,542
2022	2,560 to 30 June 2022

This is in keeping with long-term trends that approximately 25 to 33 per cent of elective activity is generated from interstate patients. It should be noted that many interstate patients actually see their doctor within the ACT, and work within the ACT. Canberra Hospital is the tertiary hospital for the region.

- (12) The following table outlines the median time wait time for Canberra patients to be removed from waiting lists in the ACT from 1 January 2016 to 30 June 2022. These figures reflect patients listed for public procedures performed in the ACT, noting that surgeries are undertaken across both public and private hospitals.

<b>ESWL Urgency</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022 ** to 30 June</b>
1	17	19	19	18	16	15	15
2	64	63	60	61	70	74	84
3	218	182	254	203	250	173	173



(13) The following table outlines the median time wait time for interstate patients to be removed from waiting lists in the ACT from 1 January 2016 to 30 June 2022. These figures reflect patients listed for public procedures performed in the ACT, noting that surgeries are undertaken across both public and private hospitals.

<b>ESWL Urgency</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022 ** to 30 June</b>
1	16	18	17	17	15	15	17
2	63	59	58	62	74	76	85
3	237	211	266	209	235	207	225

(14) The following table outlines the median wait time for patients to be removed from wait lists for reasons other than surgery since 2016.

<b>ESWL Urgency</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022 ** to 30 June</b>
1	7	9	8	7	5	8	8
2	73	50	48	47	78	61	97
3	245	210	269	224	283	196	221

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Estimates 2022-2023

Signature:



Date:

16/9/22

By the Minister for Health, Rachel Stephen-Smith MLA