



Inquiry into Annual and Financial Reports 2023–2024

Answer to question taken on notice

Asked by: Mr Thomas Emerson MLA

Addressed to: Ms Jacinta Evans, Executive Group Manager, Strategic Policy

In relation to: Age Friendly City Plan

Hearing: 18 February 2025

Uncorrected Proof Transcript pp 37-38

Transcript provided: 20 February 2025

Answer Due: 27 February 2025, 05:00 PM

Ms Evans took on notice the following question(s):

THE CHAIR: Okay. Thank you. I have one more question on this, which is about the one item that was – that had not been commenced, as of December 2023, which was the Nature Prescriptions Program. And the reason given was, this initiative not progressed, due to competing priorities and the ACT government at that time was reevaluating this initiative. Do you know what the result of that re-evaluation was?

Ms Evans: I do not, Mr Emerson. I would have to take it on notice. EPSDD had responsibility for that particular item, because the strategies are a whole of government approach. But I am happy to find out and provide more information.

THE CHAIR: Are you sure that is – so Nature Prescriptions is about health professionals prescribing spending time in nature. Which is something that the Royal Australian College of GPs recently highlighted is a very beneficial practice. Are you sure that would have sat with EPSDD?

Mr Evans: I do believe that EPSDD were the lead directorate in terms of that.

Ms Orr: Health definitely had input to it.

THE CHAIR: Okay.

Ms Orr: I remember seeing through Annual Report Hearings where this came up in conversations.

Ms Evans: Okay. Yes, I am getting the nod from officials, yes.

Ms Orr: So yes, while it—

THE CHAIR: That seems strange.

Ms Orr: While it predates my time in – as the minister for this portfolio, I do remember sitting on your side of the table, Mr Emerson, and having a discussion about this in various annual reports and budget hearings. And certainly it was one of those ones where it had to work across a few different areas.

THE CHAIR: Thanks. So you will take on notice why that was, you know, whether the evaluation led to a decision not to pursue that item.

Ms Evans: Yes, I will take on notice the status of that item.

THE CHAIR: That particular item.

Ms Evans: Yes.

Minister Orr: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

The Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate (EPSDD) is responsible for delivery of the following action under the Age-Friendly City Plan 2020-2024:

Undertaking targeted promotion of the Nature Prescriptions Program through allied health practitioner networks and ACT Health.

EPSDD has advised that this action has been 'discontinued' due to emerging high priority environmental pressures and resourcing constraints.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Social Policy

Signature:

By the Minister for Seniors and Veterans, Suzanne Orr MLA

Date:

27/02/25