



Inquiry into annual and financial reports 2024–2025

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Ms Chiaka Barry MLA

Addressed to: Minister for Health

Reference: Health - Canberra Health Services

Hearing: 11 November 2025

In relation to: Pelvic botox

Question received: 19 November 2025

Answer Due: 26 November 2025

- 1) Why has pelvic Botulinum Toxin Injections (“pelvic botox”) been discontinued as a treatment option within the ACT public health system?
- 2) What alternative endometriosis and pelvic pain treatment are provided that are comparable to “pelvic botox”?
- 3) Why is it the ACT has ‘gone alone’ as the only Health jurisdiction in Australia to discontinue that treatment option?

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

- 1) Canberra Health Services (CHS) did not introduce the use of Pelvic floor Botox injections for pelvic pain. It was used by a single specialist in a number of cases prior to CHS undertaking a review of BTA use for this purpose.

In 2024, the North Canberra Hospital (NCH) Drugs and Therapeutics Committee undertook a formal review of Botox for pelvic pain, assessing evidence provided through a specialist submission and summaries of three systematic reviews and meta-analyses. Although some studies indicated potential benefit, the overall evidence was mixed and highlighted the need for further high-quality research before firm recommendations could be made.

The RANZCOG Australian Living Evidence Guideline for Endometriosis also does not list Botox as a recommended treatment option. Based on these findings, the Executive team and the Committee did not support the continued use of Botox for pelvic pain.

After the review, CHS held several meetings with the specialist to explain the decision to cease the procedure was a precaution due to unknown risks. The specialist has been invited to submit a research proposal with strict criteria and measurable outcomes.

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- 2) CHS are committed to support those with Endometriosis and pelvic pain, and remain open to further discussions regarding future research, treatment innovations or trials in this space. CHS has expanded nursing and allied health workers at the Canberra Endometriosis Centre (CEC) and continue to focus on employing more specialists as part of this service.
- 3) The NCH Drugs and Therapeutics Committee led a review into the use of Botox for this purpose. The review included:
 - Therapeutic Goods Administration approvals
 - Literature review
 - Consultation with other public hospitals (including Canberra Hospital)

The review found:

- limited scientific evidence supports Botox injections for chronic pelvic pain;
- short-term pain relief is acknowledged, but long-term risks and side effects remain unknown;
- national and international guidelines do not recommend these treatments for chronic pelvic pain; and
- CHS is only aware of one public hospital in Australia (Westmead Hospital, NSW) that offers pelvic Botox injections, and access there is limited.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Social Policy

Signature:



Date:

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By the Minister for Health, Rachel Stephen-Smith