



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

STANDING COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, AGEING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES
CHRIS STEEL MLA (CHAIR), ELIZABETH KIKKERT MLA (DEPUTY CHAIR), VICKI DUNNE MLA,
CAROLINE LE COUTEUR MLA, MICHAEL PETTERSSON MLA

Inquiry into referred 2016–17 Annual and Financial Reports ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Asked by Mrs Kikkert:

In relation to: Multicultural and Diversity Health Policy Unit

In the hearing, Mr Richter confirmed that the Multicultural and Diversity Health Policy Unit (MDHPU) no longer exists 'on an organisational chart' but stated as well that 'they still exist in the team. They just do not have a structural unit so we can work more broadly outside of units'. In addition, he said, 'And we are still doing the work we were doing before, but we are doing more work than we did before. So we want to do more work in the multicultural space than we were doing before'.

1. Please detail this restructure, including:
 - a. What roles and responsibilities are held by the three FTE who formerly made up the MDHPU?
 - b. Specifically who are/is now responsible for overseeing and progressing multicultural and diversity policy within the Health Directorate? And who else share in this responsibility?
 - c. What specific metrics are you using to determine that more work in the multicultural space is being done than was being done before? Please provide the data behind this declaration.
 - d. How do you identify the 'people who know lots about multicultural health issues', and how exactly do they contribute to all projects?
 - e. Mr Richter noted that a current focus is getting 'a better understanding of different communities' experiences with chronic conditions'. Under the restructure, how exactly will this information be sought for and obtained, and once obtained, how will it be used to shape policy? Who will drive and monitor all of this?

2. I understand that the discontinued MDHPU consulted with the Canberra Multicultural Community Forum (CMCF). Under the restructure, does the CMCF still play any kind of advisory role?
 - a. If yes, how often is the CMCF consulted and in what context/s? How is advice given?
 - b. If no, does the Health Directorate engage with any other multicultural or community groups regarding multicultural health issues? Whom? In what situations?
 - c. How else is advice from culturally and linguistically diverse residents sought?

Ms Fitzharris: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:–

1. a. The roles and responsibilities of the three FTE are as follows:
 - I. Senior Manager, Health Policy Unit, ACT Health:
 - provide high level strategic policy and project advice to the ACT Health Executive and the ACT Government;
 - prepare complex ministerial briefings and lead and prepare responses on behalf of ACT Health and the ACT Government which may relate to local, national or international health issues;
 - represent ACT Health at forums and events and liaise and negotiate with service providers, government agencies and other stakeholders.
 - II. Senior Policy Officer, Mental Health Policy Unit:
 - provide strategic policy and project advice to the ACT Health Executive and the ACT Government and prepare ministerial briefings;
 - contribute to the design, development, implementation and evaluation of mental health policy and planning initiatives;
 - represent ACT Health at forums and events and develop, manage and maintain effective business relationships with key internal and external stakeholders.
 - III. Policy Officer, Health Policy Unit:
 - provide strategic policy and project advice to the ACT Health Executive and the ACT Government and prepare ministerial briefings;
 - contribute to the design, development, implementation and evaluation of health policy and planning initiatives.
- b. All work undertaken by the former Multicultural and Diversity Health Policy Unit has been examined closely and will continue to be done by the Policy and Stakeholder Relations Branch. The Health Policy Unit, ACT Health, is now responsible for overseeing and progressing multicultural and diversity policy. This policy area informs other units in ACT Health about multicultural issues, which is a priority across the Directorate. The Executive Office and the Mental Health Policy Unit also inform multicultural and diversity policy within ACT Health.
- c. New projects are scoped, in response to need, on an ongoing basis, for example a project to look at the experience of chronic disease within the Chinese community in Canberra. The previous unit did not have capacity to undertake additional projects and the Health Policy Unit will now be able to undertake more work than before to better inform access to care by the multicultural community.
- d. ACT Health identifies staff areas of knowledge, skills and interest and this informs the allocation of work. Multicultural training is highlighted as a priority for all health staff. In undertaking policy development, policy officers engage with a range of stakeholders including community leaders, consumers, researchers, and clinicians.
- e. ACT Health is able to draw upon the expertise of members on the Multicultural Reference Group which it chairs as well as the Refugees, Asylum Seekers and Humanitarian Coordination Committee which is chaired by the Community Services Directorate. ACT Health is actively engaging with culturally diverse communities through these groups and specific resources to gain a better understanding of chronic conditions being experienced within different communities.

2. a. The Canberra Multicultural Community Forum is represented on the Multicultural Reference Group that meets four times a year.
- b. See response to question 1e.
- c. See response to question 1e.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Health, Ageing and Community Services

Signature:



Date: 18/12/17

By the Minister for Health and Wellbeing, Meegan Fitzharris MLA

