



Inquiry into men's suicide rates

Answer to question taken on notice

Asked by: Mr Thomas Emerson MLA

Addressed to: Minister for Mental Health

In relation to: ACT Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plan 2019 to 2024 annual progress reports

Hearing: 28 November 2025

Uncorrected Proof Transcript pp 46-47

Transcript provided: 3 December 2025

Answer Due: 10 December 2025

Ms Rachel Stephen-Smith MLA took on notice the following question(s):

The Chair: I wanted to ask about the ACT Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plan 2019 to 2024. The plan promised annual reporting on implementation progress including latest data, lived experience, input and case studies. Where are these annual reports?

Ms Nagle: That is the regional plan. Yes, so Capital Health Network have—so while we develop it together with them, they have responsibility for developing reporting against the regional plan.

The Chair: Fully in their court. Because I asked them about it and they had to take it on notice.

Ms Nagle: Like, we do know that they are doing a review of it at the moment because they have talked to us about that. But yes, as far as that—they involve us—of course, we are involved in that. But as far as the responsibility for reporting against it, CHM lead that.

The Chair: Are you aware of whether those reports have been prepared? I think the plan promised three progress reports before the final report, which I think that review is the final report, would be my assumption.

Ms Nagle: Yes.

The Chair: Yes, with data and progress toward outcomes, reporting on the experiences of consumers, carers and the workforce under the plan. I understand what you are saying if it is their responsibility to do the reporting, but I think the government would be pretty invested in what the report is found.

Ms Nagle: Yes, and we absolutely have been—you know, we are involved in that and we work with them on it, but we—yes, have not provided—we do not do the reporting ourselves.

The Chair: Have you been provided with any of those promised progress reports—the three progress reports?

Ms Stephen-Smith: We will take the question on notice, thank you.

MS RACHEL-STEPHEN SMITH MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

The ACT Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plan 2019-2024 (the 2019-2024 Regional Plan) required three progress reports to be developed by the ACT Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plan Steering Committee (the Steering Committee), which was responsible for monitoring progress, reporting on performance and promoting the achievements of the plan. The Steering Committee, chaired by the Capital Health Network (CHN), included senior representatives from CHN, the former ACT Health Directorate (ACTHD), Office for Mental Health and Wellbeing, Canberra Health Services, Mental Health Community Coalition ACT, ACT Mental Health Consumer Network, and Carers ACT Mental Health Carers Voice, with additional stakeholder organisations attending as needed.

The three progress reports identified in the 2019-2024 Regional Plan (Part C: Performance and Monitoring Plan) were not developed by the Steering Committee in their intended format. I have been advised that several factors contributed to this outcome.

In the early period of the 2019-2024 Regional Plan, COVID-19 restrictions made aspects of the reporting framework challenging, particularly community consultation, focus groups, and interviews. Significant capacity was redirected to the pandemic response, impairing data collection, analysis and stakeholder engagement required for the planned reporting. As a result, the Steering Committee agreed to delay the progress report and instead provide a short Progress Summary of publicly available data, acknowledging this was the most pragmatic option under the circumstances.

The Steering Committee subsequently agreed to use CHN's 2021 Mental Health Needs Assessment as the basis for the Progress Summary. This was developed in 2021-22 by partner organisations with the Steering Committee. This summary outlined the activities and actions that had occurred under each of the 2019-2024 Regional Plan's Focus Areas. This Progress Summary was used to support the second half of implementation of the 2019-2024 Regional Plan and was not publicly released as it had not undergone the necessary consultation processes for the reasons highlighted above. It was, however, used to inform the second half of implementation and was shared with other stakeholders upon request for progress reporting.

A Reflective Review of the 2019-2024 Regional Plan is being developed by CHN with input from the Health and Community Services Directorate. This review will serve as a final report and will highlight achievements, challenges, and key lessons learned during implementation of the 2019-2024 Regional Plan.

Lessons learned from why annual progress reporting was not feasible in the 2019-2024 Regional Plan have been taken forward in the 2025-2030 Regional Plan, to ensure that any future monitoring and reporting is meaningful and achievable.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Social Policy

Signature:



Date:

11/12/25

By the Minister for Mental Health, Rachel Stephen-Smith MLA