



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

SELECT COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES 2022-2023

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

ANSWER TO QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE DURING PUBLIC HEARINGS

Asked by ED COCKS on 24 August 2022: REBECCA CROSS took on notice the following question(s):

[Ref: Hansard Transcript 24 August 2022, PAGE 71-73 & 78-79]

In relation to:

MR COCKS: Just for my understanding, you have said that the time line that I am looking at in public statements is not correct. Can you tell me: what is the original time line for this project? And why does that differ from those public statements from your government?

Ms Davidson: I might pass to Cheryl to talk in more detail about the steps in the time line. It is worth knowing, though, that we made a commitment to the commonwealth around the time line by which the eating disorder residential centre would be open and able to provide services to people and we are still working to that commitment. I will pass to Cheryl, who can talk more about the steps and the time line.

Ms Garrett: Thanks, Minister. On the time frames with the commonwealth, we built in some flexibility as there were a number of moving parts. All states and territories were provided funding from the commonwealth for a residential treatment centre and the ACT is the most progressed state or territory in terms of its design work, having identified a site and having progressed development of a model of care, engaged with people with lived experience, and having strong governance arrangements set up around it. The time frames are as the minister said. We have a concept design that is well progressed and is progressing to detailed design work. Commonwealth funding only came through for this project from last financial year, so we were using that to do the initial design work, and it is now progressing through those stages.

MR COCKS: It is great that you told the commonwealth government a particular date. I am still curious why that differed from what the government has told the community.

Ms Cross: I am happy to take that on notice. I suspect we had to wait until the funding from the commonwealth had turned up before we could then match funding in our budget, and that would have meant that we had the original intention and, if the commonwealth funding arrived later, that would have impacted on when we could commence. But I will take that on notice and get back to you.

MR COCKS: —notice, can you just provide those specific dates, you seem to be unsure about whether it is published, along with the previous point about the difference between those dates and the public statements.

Ms Cross: So I have read those dates onto the record, in terms of the other dates, the original announcement with the commonwealth was 2019 but the funding from the commonwealth did not appear for the ACT until 21-22, so there was a delay between that announcement that we would have the clinic and then, the commonwealth, through their own processes, did not provide the funding to the ACT for some two years after—

MS DAVIDSON: The answer to the Member's question is as follows: –

Residential Eating Disorders Centre timeline

On 2 April 2019, the Minister for Health, the Hon. Greg Hunt MP, announced \$63 million (2018-19 to 2024-25) to establish six new community-based residential eating disorder treatment centres (in NSW, SA, TAS, VIC, WA and the ACT), including additional funding for the Butterfly Foundation facility in Queensland.

On 1 August 2019, the Hon Greg Hunt MP wrote to the ACT Minister for Health, Rachel Stephen-Smith MLA, advising that the Commonwealth Government would provide grant funding to the Territory over six years (2018-19 to 2023-24) for projects under the Community Health and Hospitals Program (CHHP). The CHHP includes \$13.5 million over three years for a Residential Eating Disorders Centre (the Centre) to be established in the Territory with funding to commence from the 2021/2022 financial year.

On 10 June 2020, Minister Stephen-Smith on behalf of the ACT Government signed the Project Agreement (the PA) for the Australian Capital Territory Initiatives under the CHHP. The PA provides for the establishment of a community-based residential eating disorder treatment centre in the ACT.

As agreed under the PA, the first funding instalment for the Centre was provided by the Commonwealth to the ACT in the 2021/22 financial year. The first report to the Commonwealth on the Residential Treatment was submitted in May 2021 prior to the release of the first funding instalment. Six-monthly progress reports are also submitted to the Commonwealth on the Residential Treatment Centre. All of this reporting has reflected the construction completion date of December 2023.

In 2020, the ACT Health Directorate (ACTHD) was asked to provide a high-level indicative estimated timeframe for the completed construction of the Residential Treatment Centre. The date of June 2023 was put forward, noting that at this point in time multiple factors that would influence this date were unknown, such as but not limited to the following:

- The first instalment of funding had not yet been received from the Commonwealth;
- The model of care for the Residential Treatment Centre had not yet been drafted or endorsed;
- A location had not yet been identified for the Centre;
- The full impact of COVID-19 pandemic on the construction industry was unknown; and
- Subject matter expertise for the project management of the Residential Treatment Centre had not yet been engaged.

Noting the above factors, the construction completion date of June 2023 was the best estimate that ACTHD could provide at the time. This completion date was reflected in the 2020/21 and 2021/22 budget papers.

Since 2020, ACTHD has made significant progress on the Residential Treatment Centre which includes the following:

- Receipt of the first and second funding instalments from the Commonwealth for this work as agreed;
- Completion of the model of care;
- Identification of a preferred location for the Centre in Coombs;
- Engagement of Major Projects Canberra to manage this build;
- Engagement of Collard Clarke Jackson to undertake the design works, which is currently underway and is in the detailed design phase.

Given the above progress, the construction completion date has been updated to December 2023. This was reflected in the 2022/23 budget papers and is in alignment with Commonwealth reporting and community messaging.

Publication of Funding on Federal Financial Relations Website

The funding agreement which includes the Residential Treatment Centre and associated milestones is published on the Federal Financial Relations website and can be found here:

https://federalfinancialrelations.gov.au/sites/federalfinancialrelations.gov.au/files/2020-08/chhp_act_initiatives_2024_website.pdf

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

Signature: *Emma Davidson*

Date: 31 August 2022

By the Minister for Mental Health, Emma Davidson MLA