

Public Accounts and Estimates Committee
Inquiry into the 2020-21 Budget Estimates
Mental Health portfolio: 2 December 2020

Witnesses:

- Hon James Merlino MP, Minister for Mental Health
- Professor Euan Wallace AM, Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services
- Mr Terry Symonds, Deputy Secretary, Health and Wellbeing
- Mr Chris Hotham, Deputy Secretary, Infrastructure
- Mr Greg Stenton, Deputy Secretary, Corporate Services
- Ms Pam Anders, Chief Executive Officer, Mental Health Reform Victoria

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**QUESTION 1****KPIs - Admission from emergency department to a mental health bed**

Mr RIORDAN: ...Budget paper 3, page 230, ... which shows that the target for timeliness of admission to a mental health bed in less than 8 hours was only 54 per cent last financial year, and the note refers to some metropolitan services significantly impacting on this result. **Can you please provide the committee with the result by health service and what sites those health services were that so brought that figure down?**

Mr MERLINO: Thanks, Mr Riordan. In terms of that breakdown in terms of health services, I do not know. If Mr Symonds can add to that question or if we take it on notice, but I am happy to seek advice from Mr Symonds.

Mr SYMONDS: Thank you. We will have to take that on notice and provide that breakdown to you.

Source: Inquiry into the Victorian Government's Budget Estimate 2020-21, Unverified Transcript of Budget Estimates 2020-21 (Minister Merlino), 2 December 2020, **p. 3**

RESPONSE

The results for the Emergency Department to Mental Health Bed within 8 hours per health service for 2019-20 quarter 4 is accessible at the below link:

2019-20 Q4 https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/mental-health/research-and-reporting/mental-health-performance-reports/~/_link.aspx?id=DC76A45569184F97AE7DC319ADEC311D&z=z

The results for the Emergency Department to Mental Health Bed within 8 hours per health service for 2018-19 full year is accessible at the below link:

2018-19 Full Year https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/mental-health/research-and-reporting/mental-health-performance-reports/~/_link.aspx?id=8102DA7648E7476E8C5B7BA04AE9F87E&z=z

QUESTION 2**Number of people waiting in emergency department longer than eight hours**

Mr RIORDAN: ...Knowing, as you have said, that keeping people in EDs is not suitable and the people in acute mental crisis, **how many people who are waiting in an emergency department for more than 8 hours could we have admitted had we been able to get those beds online quicker?**

Mr SYMONDS: Mr Riordan, I will have to just take on notice whether or not the forward estimates numbers you are referring to relate to the interventions that I was discussing. That is not familiar to me, the numbers you are referring to, so I will take that away and just check that, if that is okay?

Source: Inquiry into the Victorian Government's Budget Estimate 2020-21, Unverified Transcript of Budget Estimates 2020–21 (Minister Merlino), 2 December 2020, **p. 4**

RESPONSE

Financial Year	Number of ED presentations departing to a mental health bed	Number of ED presentations departing to a mental health bed within 8 hours of arrival	Number of ED presentations departing to a mental health bed after 8 hours of arrival
2019/20	13,312	7,253	6,059

Number of presentations to Victorian public emergency departments departing to a mental health bed.

Source: Victorian Agency for Health Information (VAHI)

Victorian Emergency Minimum Dataset (VEMD). Date extracted: 7 December 2020. Date reported: 8 December 2020.

QUESTION 3**Behavioural assessment rooms**

Mr SYMONDS: [...] behavioural assessment rooms are intended to provide safe and humane care within the emergency department as an alternative to sitting in a general cubicle, where they might have exposure to other staff and patients.

Mr HIBBINS: Yes. And **do we have figures for the average time that patients are being within those rooms?**

Mr SYMONDS: I have not seen that before. I am happy to inquire, and if we have that information, happy to provide it. I am not aware that it is available in the department, but happy to see if it is.

Source: Inquiry into the Victorian Government's Budget Estimate 2020-21, Unverified Transcript of Budget Estimates 2020–21 (Minister Merlino), 2 December 2020, **p. 6**

RESPONSE

The Guidelines for behavioural assessment rooms in emergency departments (May 2017) states that supporting patient and worker safety and reducing violence and aggression in Victorian public hospitals are key priorities of the Department of Health and Human Services. The department has been working with health services to strengthen their responses to prevent and manage occupational violence and aggression.

Data is collected and monitored at individual health service level only, and this information is not provided to the Department of Health and Human Services.

QUESTION 4**Emergency wait times by site**

Mr D O'BRIEN: Thank you, Chair. I would like to just follow on from that if I could. I wonder whether someone could provide us, perhaps on notice, with the number of individual cases waiting in emergency departments longer than 8 hours by health service or site and potentially by region if you have that information.

Mr MERLINO: Yes, thanks, Mr O'Brien. If we can provide that data on notice, we will. I will request the department do that.

Mr D O'BRIEN: Can I just clarify: is that data available—as in do you keep it?

Mr SYMONDS: In the percentage indicator, proportion transferred to a bed within 8 hours etcetera, you are after the number who did not meet that target—the actual number, not a percentage?

Mr D O'BRIEN: Yes.

Mr SYMONDS: Yes, we have got that data.

Mr D O'BRIEN: Okay. If that could be provided on notice, that would be great. [...]

Source: Inquiry into the Victorian Government's Budget Estimate 2020-21, Unverified Transcript of Budget Estimates 2020-21 (Minister Merlino), 2 December 2020, p. 7

RESPONSE

Financial Year	Health service	Presenting ED campus	Number of ED presentations departing to a mental health bed	Number of ED presentations departing to a mental health bed within 8 hours of arrival	Number of ED presentations departing to a mental health bed after 8 hours of arrival
2019/20	Albury Wodonga Health	Wodonga	3	2	1
	Albury Wodonga Health Total		3	2	1
	Alfred Health	Sandringham	6	6	0
		Alfred	480	324	156
	Alfred Health Total		486	330	156
	Austin Health	ARMC Austin	513	355	158
	Austin Health Total		513	355	158
	Bairnsdale Regional Health Service	Bairnsdale	148	120	28
	Bairnsdale Regional Health Service Total		148	120	28
	Ballarat Health Services	Ballarat Base	252	182	70
	Ballarat Health Services Total		252	182	70
	Barwon Health	Geelong	517	408	109
	Barwon Health Total		517	408	109
	Bass Coast Health	Wonthaggi	60	47	13
	Bass Coast Health Total		60	47	13
	Bendigo Health	Bendigo	724	607	117

	Bendigo Health Total		724	607	117
	Central Gippsland Health Service	Sale	85	58	27
	Central Gippsland Health Service Total		85	58	27
	Eastern Health	Angliss	107	57	50
		Box Hill	590	392	198
		Maroondah	1,248	844	404
	Eastern Health Total		1,945	1,293	652
	Echuca Regional Health	Echuca	57	47	10
	Echuca Regional Health Total		57	47	10
	Goulburn Valley Health	Shepparton	270	227	43
	Goulburn Valley Health Total		270	227	43
	Latrobe Regional Hospital	Latrobe Regional	330	231	99
	Latrobe Regional Hospital Total		330	231	99
	Melbourne Health	Royal Melbourne Hospital	185	32	153
	Melbourne Health Total		185	32	153
	Mercy Hospitals Victoria Ltd	Mercy Hospital Women	0	0	0
		Mercy Werribee	690	389	301
	Mercy Hospitals Victoria Ltd Total		690	389	301
	Mildura Base Hospital	Mildura	172	150	22
	Mildura Base Hospital Total		172	150	22
	Monash Health	Casey Hospital	552	112	440
		Dandenong	687	267	420
		Monash Medical Centre Clayton	630	205	425
	Monash Health Total		1,869	584	1,285
	Northeast Health Wangaratta	Wangaratta	125	58	67
	Northeast Health Wangaratta Total		125	58	67
	Northern Health	Northern	1,484	391	1,093
	Northern Health Total		1,484	391	1,093
	Peninsula Health	Frankston	934	617	317
		Rosebud	9	6	3
	Peninsula Health Total		943	623	320
	Royal Children's Hospital	Royal Children's Hospital	107	88	19
	Royal Children's Hospital Total		107	88	19
	The Royal Victorian Eye and Ear Hospital	The Royal Victorian Eye and Ear Hospital	1	1	0
	The Royal Victorian Eye and Ear Hospital Total		1	1	0

	Royal Women's Hospital	Royal Women's	1	1	0
	Royal Women's Hospital Total		1	1	0
	South West Healthcare	Warrnambool	187	165	22
	South West Healthcare Total		187	165	22
	St Vincent's Health	St Vincent's	474	356	118
	St Vincent's Health Total		474	356	118
	Swan Hill District Health	Swan Hill	66	48	18
	Swan Hill District Health Total		66	48	18
	West Gippsland Healthcare Group	West Gippsland	116	76	40
	West Gippsland Healthcare Group Total		116	76	40
	Western District Health Service	Hamilton	31	25	6
	Western District Health Service Total		31	25	6
	Western Health	Footscray	378	173	205
		Sunshine	1,050	158	892
		Williamstown	0	0	0
	Western Health Total		1,428	331	1,097
	Wimmera Health Care Group	Horsham	43	28	15
	Wimmera Health Care Group Total		43	28	15

Number of presentations to Victorian public emergency departments departing to a mental health bed, by presenting ED campus

Source: Victorian Health and Human Services Building Authority (VHHSBA)

Victorian Emergency Minimum Dataset (VEMD). Date extracted: 7 December 2020. Date reported: 8 December 2020.

QUESTION 5**Delivery of 179 beds**

Mr RICHARDSON: Thank you, Chair. Deputy Premier, can I refer you to budget paper 3, particularly pages 64 and 78. I also note that the government's announcement on 12 November was to deliver 144 public mental health beds and 35 acute treatment beds for public mental health patients in private health services. **Are you able to outline for the committee, Deputy Premier, the total cost to deliver the 179 beds and how they might be outlined in budget paper 3; and also—this might be something for our Deputy Secretary Chris Hotham to talk about—the design as well of those facilities?**

Mr MERLINO: Thanks, Mr Richardson. It is a good question because it is not just about delivering additional beds; it is going to be a much different setting, and that is why co-design with lived experience and with service providers has been so important. [.....]

I might ask Mr Hotham to just talk about the design. We have released the design; we are going out to tender. These are very, very different facilities than what many members might be aware of that we currently have.

Mr HOTHAM: Thank you, Deputy Premier. Mr Richardson, yes, these are facilities; these are not just beds. These are new state-of-the-art mental health facilities across those four sites. I think in terms of the approach it will change a stigmatised and disconnected service at many health service sites, to be something that is integrated, dignified, clinically robust. We have been working with our colleagues at Mental Health Reform Victoria on the co-design aspects of this, working closely with clinicians, with health services and with those who have a lived experience, and all of them have informed effectively a very different model of delivery and of design. [.....]

Source: Inquiry into the Victorian Government's Budget Estimate 2020-21, Unverified Transcript of Budget Estimates 2020–21 (Minister Merlino), 2 December 2020, p. 10-11

RESPONSE

In response to this question, I am providing images of:

- the existing mental health facilities at Northern Hospital, Royal Melbourne Hospital, Sunshine Hospital and the McKellar Centre at Barwon Health
- the early designs of the four new mental health facilities at each of these sites that will deliver 120 public hospital-based acute mental health beds.

The designs of the new hospital-based beds are contemporary and have been co-designed with people with lived experience, meeting the requirements of the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System.

A further 24 public beds will be delivered through a hospital-in-the-home model and 35 beds will be procured for public mental health patients from a private service provider.

To respond to Recommendation 2 of the Royal Commission's Interim Report and expand acute mental health services, the 2020-21 Victorian Budget allocated:

- \$492 million to deliver 120 public hospital-based acute mental health beds

- \$18.9 million to procure 35 beds for public mental health patients from a private service provider.

The government has previously allocated funding for the delivery of hospital-in-the-home acute mental health beds so that more Victorians can access specialist mental health care in their own homes. This includes:

- funding in April 2020 as part of a \$59.4 million coronavirus mental health package
- \$4.9 million in May 2020 (supported by Commonwealth offset funding) as part of a \$19.5 million mental health package to continue reform of Victoria's mental health system.

The government has also allocated funding to support the participation of people with lived experience through a co-production process for the planning and delivery of the new beds.

Source: Victorian Health and Human Services Building Authority (VHHSBA)

- The design images have been developed by our principal consultant for the project delivering the hospital-based beds.
- The images of existing mental health facilities have been provided by the Department of Health and Human Services.
- Victorian Budget 2020/21 – Service Delivery – Budget Paper No.3 (pp. 64 & 78).

Attachment 2a – slides

QUESTION 6**Emergency wait times and assessment**

Ms VALLENCE: Okay. Moving onto a different topic, **how many people present at emergency departments with mental health but do not get seen at all? Perhaps this might be something that you add to what you have agreed to take on notice for Mr O'Brien. If you can add, when you are preparing that, those who attend ED and have waited perhaps more than the 8 hours or for a long period of time and then do not actually get seen at all. Is it something that you could add in?**

Mr MERLINO: If there is additional information that we can provide, Ms Vallence, we will do so. I know the department has given me a note that we have a response to Mr Riordan's question about data. I am happy to provide that now.

Ms VALLENCE: No, on notice is fine.

The CHAIR: Sorry, Ms Vallence. If the minister has the information here, he can provide it now.

Ms VALLENCE: That was part of Mr Riordan's questions, so—

Mr SYMONDS: Do you mind if I just clarify your question, sorry?

The CHAIR: Sorry, yes.

Mr SYMONDS: **Before we take that away on notice I just want to clarify what it is you are after, sorry. Is it the number of clients who were not seen by a clinician inside the emergency department and left without being seen by clinician? Is that what you are after?**

Ms VALLENCE: Correct.

Ms RICHARDS: Chair, sorry, if you do not mind, I love following along in the budget papers where we are up to.

Ms VALLENCE: BP3, pages 229 and 230.

Ms RICHARDS: Thank you so much.

The CHAIR: And just to clarify, was that information we had available now in answer to Ms Vallence's question or was that something—

Mr MERLINO: We will take on notice, Chair, the query that Ms Vallence has raised. We have got a response to Mr Riordan's. I am happy to provide that later.

Source: Inquiry into the Victorian Government's Budget Estimate 2020-21, Unverified Transcript of Budget Estimates 2020-21 (Minister Merlino), 2 December 2020, **p. 12**

RESPONSE

Financial Year	Number of mental health-related ED presentations	Number of mental health-related ED presentations where the patient was not seen by a definitive service provider	Number of mental health-related ED presentations where the patient was not seen by a definitive service provider, and departed the ED more than 8 hours from arrival
2019/20	100,945	348	6

Number of mental health-related presentations to Victorian public emergency departments, where the patient was not seen by a definitive service provider.

Source: Victorian Agency for Health Information

Victorian Emergency Minimum Dataset (VEMD). Date extracted: 7 December 2020. Date reported: 8 December 2020.

QUESTION 7

VALLENCE: So, in 2014–15 the mental health clinical care bed days were at 185 000, almost 186 000, and mental health community support services bed days were also at a high of 73 000, almost 74 000. By comparison, last year's actual result represents around a 22 per cent reduction in mental health bed days. Can you explain why that is?

Mr MERLINO: I am happy to take that notice, Ms Vallence.

Ms VALLENCE: Thanks. Thank you very much. [...]

Source: Inquiry into the Victorian Government's Budget Estimate 2020-21, Unverified Transcript of Budget Estimates 2020–21 (Minister Merlino), 2 December 2020, **p. 13**

RESPONSE

The Clinical Residential Bed Days were 185,732 in 2014-15 decreasing to 151,523 in 2019-20. The Clinical Residential Bed Days target in 2014-15 was 200,75, progressively decreasing down to 153574 in 2017-18, the target has not changed since 2017-18. The decrease is due to the closure of the below aged persons mental health services:

- South Stone Lodge Residential Aged Care (Melbourne Health) 2014
- Michael Court Aged Hostel (Peninsula Health) 2014
- Caulfield Namarra Aged Persons Mental Health (Alfred Health) 2015
- Weighbridge (Melbourne Health) 2016

The reduced aged people's mental health beds are due to significant reform in the aged care sector which resulted in many services providing similar facilities in mainstream aged care residential homes. The beds also closed due to the dated amenity and not in keeping with contemporary expectations of standards of living for residential care.