Public Accounts and Estimates Committee Inquiry into the 2023-24 Financial and Performance Outcomes

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Department of Health

Friday 22 September 2024

Witnesses

Professor Euan Wallace
Professor Zoe Wainer
Ms Katherine Whetton
Ms Jodie Geissler
Mr Daen Dorazio
Ms Deanne Leaver

Attendees

Ms Jacinda de Witts
Ms Louise McKinlay
Mr Andrew Crisp
Dr Lance Emerson
Ms Danielle North

Legend

All questions are in **red text**.

The context, as per the Unverified Transcript, is in black text.

QUESTION: Can you please provide a breakdown of all individual hospitals that received funds through a Treasurer's Advance and the amount.

Page Number: 4

SOURCE: 2023-24 Budget

COMMITTEE MEMBER ASKING QUESTION: Danny O'Brien

HEARING: 22 November 2024

Responsible Division: Hospitals Victoria

RESPONSE

Answer:

Grant funding is an existing funding stream for our health services and is paid throughout the financial year. These amounts paid to health services in FY2023/24 were targeted allocations, to help ensure that all health services are able to have sufficient cash to ensure service delivery to Victorians.

Agency Name	Sum of FY23/24 (\$)
1038 - Bass Coast Health (Wonthaggi)	19,708,721.51
1083 - Albury Wodonga Health	28,152,075.40
1092 - Barwon Health (Geelong)	36,086,465.68
1094 - Victorian Institute Of Forensic Mental Health	810,644.40
1105 - Western District Health Service - Hamilton	2,786,161.30
1107 - Mercy Hospitals Victoria Limited	72,473,460.00
1121 - South West Healthcare (Warrnambool)	4,785,270.73
1122 - Central Gippsland Health Service	683,739.62
1139 - Footscray Health (Western Health)	152,885,025.61
1145 - Northern Health	74,702,684.87
1147 - Box Hill Hospital (Eastern)	89,305,464.85
1153 - Alfred Health	163,415,501.01
1158 - The Royal Melbourne Hospital - City Campus	160,763,001.95
1824 - Mildura Base Public Hospital	6,927,826.00
603 - Ambulance Service Victoria - Metropolitan Region	37,302,556.00
610 - Austin Health	182,121,298.11
621 - Bairnsdale Regional Health Service	12,590,363.42
626 - Grampians Health	72,992,193.18
646 - Calvary Health Care Bethlehem Limited	1,052,408.00
703 - Dental Health Services Victoria (Royal Dental)	1,012,034.15
714 - East Grampians Health Serv	8,341,209.97
715 - Echuca Regional Health	12,881,210.34
781 - Latrobe Regional	1,972,239.98
807 - Maryborough District Health Service	2,789,608.80
838 - Dhelkaya Health	5,740,413.85

866 - Peninsula Health (Mornington)	49,242,598.95
870 - Peter Maccallum Cancer Institute	45,155,242.52
874 - Portland District Health	7,045,649.00
887 - The Royal Children's Hospital	37,679,871.76
893 - The Royal Womens Hospital	35,733,876.51
917 - Monash M.C.	15,350,242.68
945 - St Vincents Hospital Melbourne Limited	63,671,571.00
951 - Swan Hill District Health	8,044,519.22
970 - Northeast Health Wangaratta	22,180,505.25
976 - West Gippsland Healthcare Group	4,760,112.55
992 - Bendigo Health	54,302,908.56
1005 - Mansfield District Hospital	716,200.87
1075 - Hepburn Health Service	296,956.77
600 - Alpine Health	184,820.48
768 - Kerang	87,237.48
808 - Mcivor Health & Cs (Heathcote)	71,127.07
861 - Omeo	101,091.77
977 - West Wimmera Health Service	281,251.97
	1,497,187,363.14

QUESTION: To help us understand [health service draft model budgets] could the department provide to us on notice the initial submissions from the health services to the department of their budgets before the \$1.5 billion was announced and then subsequent?

Page Number: 6

SOURCE: 2023-24 Budget

COMMITTEE MEMBER ASKING QUESTION: Danny O'Brien

HEARING: 22 November 2024

Responsible Division: Hospitals Victoria

RESPONSE

Answer: This information exists only in the form of iterative planning conversations between the department and health services, thus it is not available in a format that can be provided.

QUESTION: As part of the Health Service Plan, Novelli Porter were engaged to develop plans for each network – can copies be provided on notice.

Page Number: 8

SOURCE: Health Services Plan

COMMITTEE MEMBER ASKING QUESTION: Danny O'Brien

HEARING: 22 November 2024
Responsible Division: Comms

RESPONSE

Answer: Materials developed by Porter Novelli remained working drafts throughout the contracted period and finalised versions do not exist. The working-drafts become inputs into the department's communications team to support planning for the release of the Health Services Plan, ahead of Victorian Government decisions on its response to the Health Services Plan.

QUESTION: Health Services – Which Priority Primary Care Centres are state funded, and which are both

Commonwealth and State funded?

Page Number: 11

SOURCE: DH Questionnaire

COMMITTEE MEMBER ASKING QUESTION: Michael Galea

HEARING: 22 November 2024

Responsible Division: CPH (PCH)

RESPONSE

Answer:

Priority Primary Care Centres are now known as Urgent Care Clinics (UCCs).

UCCs operate on a hybrid funding model whereby the state and Commonwealth governments provide operational grants and patient visits are billed through the Medicare Benefits Scheme (MBS).

In 2023-24, 10 Victorian UCCs (nine existing and a new clinic established in inner Melbourne) were funded under a Federation Funding Agreement with the Commonwealth as part of the Medicare UCC program to June 2026. The Commonwealth has committed to funding a further seven existing Victorian UCCs from 2024-25 through to June 2026.

UCC locations and funding source are as follows:

Medicare Urgent Care Clinics

Commonwealth funded from July 2023:

Ballarat

Frankston

Geelona

Heidelberg

Inner Melbourne (Carlton)

Narre Warren

Prahran

Shepparton

Sunbury

Werribee

Transition to Commonwealth funding from July 2024

Bendigo

Dandenong

Epping

Maribyrnong

Maroondah

Melton

Mount Waverley

Urgent Care Clinics - State funded:

Baw Baw (Warragul)

Craigieburn

Forest Hill

Latrobe (Moe)

Mildura

Monash Children's

Moonee Ponds

Richmond

Royal Children's Hospital

Sunshine

Warrnambool

Wodonga

QUESTION: Armstrong Creek Ambulance Station - What is the average cost of a regional ambulance

station?

Page Number: 15

SOURCE: Budget Paper 3

COMMITTEE MEMBER ASKING QUESTION: Bev McArthur

HEARING: 22 November 2024 **Responsible Division:** VHBA

RESPONSE

Answer:

The average construction cost for regional ambulance stations completed from 2019 to 2022 (calendar year; total of 9 stations) was \$6,600/m2. For those stations completed from 2023 to 2024 (calendar year; total of 9 stations) the average construction cost was \$8,400/m2. All stations in these samples are single-storey and have unique characteristics for each site.

Costs excluded in the average construction cost include:

- land and site servicing, as there is high variability between sites (e.g. some stations required land acquisition whereas others were built on an existing ambulance station site and involved demolition).
- fit-out, design and project management costs as they were managed at a program level for all sites funded prior to Armstrong Creek.

VHBA has standardised ambulance station design to drive efficiency across the program. In some instances, a bespoke solution is required due to unique requirements – as is the case for Armstrong Creek – and can result in higher design and build costs.

QUESTION: Armstrong Creek Ambulance Station - Once completed, will it be staffed 24/7?

Page Number: 16

SOURCE: Budget Paper 3

COMMITTEE MEMBER ASKING QUESTION: Bev McArthur

HEARING: 22 November 2024 **Responsible Division:** HHS

RESPONSE

Answer:

- The Armstong Creek Peak Period Unit is already operational, having commenced in late 2022. The team will move from its temporary base to the new branch upon completion.
- The operating hours of the new branch will be informed by operational needs in the area and will be confirmed prior to the branch opening.
- Ambulance Victoria routinely monitors demand and activity patterns and will relocate resources as necessary to maximise coverage and service availability. This will help to ensure the new Armstrong Creek branch can best meet the needs of the local community.

QUESTION: Mental Health – Can you please provide an update on the Royal Commission implementation plan? A summary against all recommendations, revised due dates and why are they delayed?

Page Number: 23

SOURCE: Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System implementation plan

COMMITTEE MEMBER ASKING QUESTION: Danny O'Brien

HEARING: 22 November 2024 **Responsible Division:** MHW

RESPONSE

Answer:

The Department of Health has been working with the Mental Health and Wellbeing sector to consider the sequencing of initiatives for the next stage of reform, taking into account the impact of the volume and pace of change. The government is expected to release a reform plan in the near future that will set out the timeframes for reform over phase two from 2024-27.

Implementation status of all recommendations as at 30 June 2024 provided in Table 1 attached separately.

QUESTION: MH Workforce – What is the annual FTE by skill category/qualification since 2019-20 and what is net change over the 5-year period?

Page Number: 26-27

SOURCE: Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System implementation plan

COMMITTEE MEMBER ASKING QUESTION: Danny O'Brien

HEARING: 22 November 2024 **Responsible Division**: HHS

RESPONSE

Answer:

Please note that this data is not public and is being shared with the approval of the Data Custodian.

The table below provides an overview of the public mental health workforce by discipline from 2021 to 2023. Noting the department does not have mental health workforce census data earlier than 2021.

Discipline	FTE				
Discipline	2021	2022	2023		
Expanded allied health	76	110	133		
Lived and living experience	212	332	357		
Management and administration	735	1042	922		
Medical workforce	59	90	79		

МНО	93	58	80	
Generic mental health role	226	358	98	
Nursing	5383	5712	5773	
Occupational Therapy	481	560	611	
Other specific role	156	280	324	
Psychiatry	1051	1212	1285	
Psychology	586	739	783	
Social work	809	1008	1115	
Total	9867	11501	11560	

QUESTION: Health workforce – How many mental health and wellbeing post grad nurse scholarships were granted, applied for and successful in 2023-24?

Page Number: 27

SOURCE: Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System implementation plan

COMMITTEE MEMBER ASKING QUESTION: Danny O'Brien

HEARING: 22 November 2024 **Responsible Division**: HHS

RESPONSE

Answer:

A total of 350 postgraduate scholarships were awarded in 2023-24 as part of the Victorian Government's Mental Health Scholarships program, this included

- 140 Full course fee Post Grad MH Nurse Scholarships from 257 applications
- 118 \$3000 Post Grad MH Nurse Scholarships from 592 applications
- 10 Psychiatric State Enrolled Nursing Grants from 26 applications
- 60 Allied Health and AOD Postgraduate Scholarships from 64 applications
- 22 Lived and Living Experience Workforce University Scholarships from 31 applications

Applications for the 2024-25 Mental Health Scholarship Program are currently being assessed.

QUESTION: What date will the Voluntary Assist Dying Act review be released?

Page Number: 34

SOURCE: The Centre for Evaluation and Research Evidence review

COMMITTEE MEMBER ASKING QUESTION: Aiv Pugielli

HEARING: 22 November 2024
Responsible Division: HHS

RESPONSE

Answer:

The Voluntary Assisted Dying Act 2017 (the Act) requires the Minister to cause a review of the Act in its fifth year and be a review of the first 4 years of operation. On completing the review, the Minister must cause a report of the review to be tabled before each House of the Parliament. The report is planned for release in coming months.

QUESTION: MH output group – what proportion is spent on services, staffing and infrastructure? In % form.

Page Number: 34-35

SOURCE: PAEC recommendation

COMMITTEE MEMBER ASKING QUESTION: Aiv Pugielli

HEARING: 22 November 2024 **Responsible Division:** MHW

RESPONSE

Answer:

Total expenditure for the Mental Health Output was \$2.706 billion in 2023-34, of which 3% was for departmental staffing with the remainder (97%) allocated for service delivery in the mental health sector. Total capital (infrastructure) expenditure for the Mental Health Output was \$240.6 million in 2023-24.

QUESTION: Abortion services – Have any public hospitals conscientiously objected to providing abortion services and which ones?

Page Number: 37 SOURCE: N/A

COMMITTEE MEMBER ASKING QUESTION: Aiv Pugielli

HEARING: 22 November 2024
Responsible Division: CPH/HHS

RESPONSE

Answer:

There is no obligation to report a conscientious objection to the Department of Health.

QUESTION: How many nurse practitioners can prescribe the abortion pill? How many nurse practitioners are providing? How many have taken up training for this and where are they geographically located?

Page Number: 38

SOURCE: TGA changes

COMMITTEE MEMBER ASKING QUESTION: Aiv Pugielli

HEARING: 22 November 2024
Responsible Division: CPH/HHS

RESPONSE

Answer:

The department does not collect this information.

QUESTION: How many endorsed midwives can prescribe the abortion pill, have taken up training and where are they geographically located?

Page Number: 38

SOURCE: Future changes to Medicare announcement

COMMITTEE MEMBER ASKING QUESTION: Aiv Pugielli

HEARING: 22 November 2024
Responsible Division: CPH/HHS

RESPONSE Answer:

The department does not collect this information.

Table 1: Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System

Implementation progress - June 2024

Notes:

Where recommendations contain subcomponents with different due dates, recommendation subcomponent numbers and their specific due dates are listed in the *Timing* column.

Lead departments/agencies and lead Ministerial portfolios are subject to change as implementation design is undertaken.

Reco	mmendation	Responsibility		Timing					
Rec #.	Title	Lead department/agency	Lead Ministerial portfolio	Implementation to be completed by (as set by Royal Commission)	Implementation progress				
Final	Final Report Recommendations								
1	Supporting good mental health and wellbeing	Department of Health	Mental Health	1.1 End 2022 1.2-1.4 End 2031	In progress				
2	Governance arrangements for promoting good mental health and preventing mental illness	Department of Health	Mental Health	End 2022	In progress				
3	Establishing a responsive and integrated mental health and wellbeing system	Department of Health	Mental Health	3.1 & 3.2.a End 2026 3.2.b. & 3.2.c End 2022 3.2.d. End 2026 3.3 End 2022 3.4 & 3.5 End 2024	In progress				
4	Towards integrated regional governance	Department of Health	Mental Health	4.1 Mid 2021 4.2 End 2023 4.3 End 2026 4.4 End 2023 4.5 End 2022	In progress				
5	Core functions of community mental health and wellbeing services	Department of Health	Mental Health	End 2026	In progress				
6	Helping people find and access treatment, care and support	Department of Health	Mental Health	6.1 & 6.2 End 2026 6.3-6.5 End 2022	In progress				
7	Identifying needs and providing initial support in mental health and wellbeing services	Department of Health	Mental Health	End 2026	In progress				
8	Responding to mental health crises	Department of Health	Mental Health	End 2024 8.3.c End 2022	In progress				
9	Developing 'safe spaces' and crisis respite facilities	Department of Health	Mental Health	End 2026	In progress				
10	Supporting responses from emergency services to mental health crises	Department of Health	Ambulance Services	10.1 End 2024 10.2 End 2022 10.3 End 2024	In progress				
11	New models of care for bed-based services	Department of Health	Mental Health	11.1 End 2026 11.2 End 2022 11.3 End 2026 11.4 End 2031	In progress				
12	Developing new bed-based rehabilitation services	Department of Health	Mental Health	12.1 & 12.2 End 2026 12.3 End 2031	To be commenced				

13	Addressing gender-based violence in mental health facilities	Department of Health	Mental Health	13.1 End 2031 13.2 Mid 2022 13.3 End 2026 13.4 End 2031	In progress
14	Supporting mental health consultation liaison services	Department of Health	Mental Health	End 2024	In progress
15	Supporting good mental health and wellbeing in local communities	Department of Health	Mental Health	15.1 & 15.2 End 2024 15.3 End 2026 15.4 End 2022	In progress
16	Establishing mentally healthy workplaces	Department of Premier & Cabinet	Premier	16.1 End 2022 16.2 End 2026	In progress
17	Supporting social and emotional wellbeing in schools	Department of Education	Education	17.1 End 2031 17.2 End 2022 17.3 End 2031	In progress
18	Supporting the mental health and wellbeing of prospective and new parents	Department of Health	Mental Health	18.1 End 2026 18.2 End 2022	In progress
19	Supporting infant, child and family mental health and wellbeing	Department of Health	Mental Health	19.1-19.4 End 2022 19.5 End 2026	In progress
20	Supporting the mental health and wellbeing of young people	Department of Health	Mental Health	20.1 End 2022 20.2 End 2024 20.3 End 2026 20.4 End 2022	In progress
21	Redesigning bed-based services for young people	Department of Health	Mental Health	21.1 & 21.2 End 2026 21.3 End 2022	In progress
22	Supporting the mental health and wellbeing of older Victorians	Department of Health	Mental Health	22.1 End 2022 22.2 & 22.3 End 2024	To be commenced
23	Establishing a new Statewide Trauma Service	Department of Health	Mental Health	End 2022	In progress
24	A new approach to addressing trauma	Department of Health	Mental Health	End 2026	In progress
25	Supported housing for adults and young people living with mental illness	Department of Families, Fairness and Housing	Housing	25.1 End 2031 25.2 End 2022 25.3 End 2024 25.4 End 2026 25.5 End 2022 25.6 End 2031	In progress
26	Governance arrangements for suicide prevention and response efforts	Department of Health	Mental Health	26.1 End 2022 26.2 End 2031	In progress
27	Facilitating suicide prevention and response initiatives	Department of Health	Mental Health	27.1 & 27.2 End 2024 27.3 End 2022	In progress
28	Developing system-wide roles for the full and effective participation of people with lived experience of mental illness or psychological distress	Department of Health	Mental Health	End 2031	In progress
29	A new agency led by people with lived experience of mental illness or psychological distress	Department of Health	Mental Health	End 2024	In progress
30	Developing system-wide involvement of family members and carers	Department of Health	Mental Health	End 2031	In progress
31	Supporting families, carers and supporters	Department of Health	Mental Health	31.1 & 31.2 End 2022 31.3 End 2024	In progress
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32	Supporting young carers	Department of Health	Mental Health	End 2022	In progress
33	Supporting Aboriginal social and	Department of Health	Mental Health	33.1-33.3 End 2022	In progress
	emotional wellbeing			33.4 End 2024	
34	Working in partnership with and improving accessibility for diverse communities	Department of Health	Mental Health	34.1 End 2031 34.2 End 2022 34.3 End 2031 34.4 End 2021 34.5 End 2024	In progress
35	Improving outcomes for people living with mental illness and substance use or addiction	Department of Health	Mental Health	End 2022	In progress
36	A new statewide service for people living with mental illness and substance use or addiction	Department of Health	Mental Health	36.1 End 2024 36.2 End 2026 36.3 End 2022	In progress
37	Supporting the mental health and wellbeing of people in contact with, or at risk of coming into contact with, the criminal and youth justice systems	Department of Justice and Community Safety	Attorney General	37.1 End 2026 37.2 & 37.3 End 2022 37.4 End 2024	In progress
38	Providing safe and appropriate mental health treatment, care and support at Thomas Embling Hospital	Department of Health	Mental Health	38.1 End 2026 38.2 End 2031	In progress
39	Supporting the mental health and wellbeing of people in rural and regional Victoria	Department of Health	Mental Health	39.1.a. End 2026 39.1.b. End 2022	In progress
40	Providing incentives for the mental health and wellbeing workforce in rural and regional areas	Department of Health	Mental Health	End 2031	In progress
41	Addressing stigma and discrimination	Department of Health	Mental Health	41.1 End 2031 41.2 End 2024 41.3 End 2031 41.4 End 2031	In progress
42	A new Mental Health and Wellbeing Act	Department of Health	Mental Health	Mid 2022	Completed
43	Future review of mental health laws	Department of Health	Mental Health	End 2031	To be commenced
44	A new Mental Health and Wellbeing Commission	Department of Health	Mental Health	44.1 & 44.2 Mid 2022 44.3 End 2031	In progress
45	Effective leadership of and accountability for the mental health and wellbeing system	Department of Health	Mental Health	45.1 Mid 2022 45.2 End 2031 45.3 Mid 2021 45.4 End 2031	Completed
46	Facilitating government-wide efforts	Department of Premier & Cabinet / Department of Health	Premier / Mental Health	Mid 2022	Completed
47	Planning the new mental health and wellbeing system	Department of Health	Mental Health	47.1 End 2022 47.2 End 2023 47.3 End 2031 47.4 End 2026	In progress
48	Selecting providers and resourcing services	Department of Health	Mental Health	48.1 & 48.2 End 2031 48.3 End 2022	In progress
49	Monitoring and improving mental health and wellbeing service provision	Department of Health	Mental Health	End 2022	In progress

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50	Encouraging national partnerships	Department of Health	Mental Health	End 2022	Completed
51	Commissioning for integration	Department of Health	Mental Health	End 2031	To be commenced
52	Improving the quality and safety of mental health and wellbeing services	Department of Health	Mental Health	52.1 End 2021 52.2 End 2031	In progress
53	Strong oversight of the quality and safety of mental health and wellbeing services	Department of Health	Mental Health	End 2031	Completed
54	Towards the elimination of seclusion and restraint	Department of Health	Mental Health	54.1 End 2031 54.2 End 2022 54.3 & 54.4 End 2031	In progress
55	Ensuring compulsory treatment is only used as a last resort	Department of Health	Mental Health	55.1 End 2031 55.2 End 2022 55.3 & 55.4 End 2031	In progress
56	Supporting consumers to exercise their rights	Department of Health	Mental Health	56.1 End 2031 56.2 End 2022 56.3 End 2024 56.4 End 2031	In progress
57	Workforce strategy, planning and structural reform	Department of Health	Mental Health	57.1 End 2031 57.2 End 2023 57.3 End 2021	In progress
58	Workforce capabilities and professional development	Department of Health	Mental Health	58.1 End 2021 58.2 & 58.3 End 2022 58.4 End 2031	In progress
59	Workforce safety and wellbeing	Department of Health	Mental Health	59.1 End 2021 59.2 End 2026 59.3 End 2021	In progress
60	Building a contemporary system through digital technology	Department of Health	Mental Health	60.1 End 2022 60.2 End 2026 60.3 End 2024	To be commenced
61	Sharing mental health and wellbeing information	Department of Health	Mental Health	End 2022	In progress
62	Contemporary information architecture	Department of Health	Mental Health	End 2024	In progress
63	Facilitating translational research and its dissemination	Department of Health	Mental Health	63.1 End 2023 63.2 End 2024	In progress
64	Driving innovation in mental health treatment, care and support	Department of Health	Mental Health	End 2031	To be commenced
65	Evaluating mental health and wellbeing programs, initiatives and innovations	Department of Health	Mental Health	65.1 End 2022 65.2 End 2026 65.3 End 2031	In progress
Interi	m Report Recommendations				
1	Victorian Collaborative Centre for Mental Health and Wellbeing	Department of Health	Mental Health	Not specified	Completed
2	Targeted acute mental health service expansion	Department of Health	Mental Health	Mid 2022	Completed
3	Suicide prevention	Department of Health	Mental Health	Not specified	Completed
4	Aboriginal social and emotional wellbeing	Department of Health	Mental Health	End 2026	Completed
5	A service designed and delivered by people with lived experience	Department of Health	Mental Health	Not specified	In progress

6	Lived experience workforces	Department of Health	Mental Health	Not specified	In progress
7	Workforce readiness	Department of Health	Mental Health	Junior Medical Officers by End 2023, otherwise not specified	In progress
8	New approach to mental health investment	Department of Treasury & Finance / Department of Premier & Cabinet	Treasurer / Premier	Not specified	Completed
9	The Mental Health Implementation Office	Department of Health	Mental Health	Not specified	Completed