



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

No. 306

WRITTEN QUESTION

J Davis to the Minister for Corrections, Hon Gerard Maley MLA:

Prison Healthcare

These questions follow the answer to Written Question No. 110 of the 15th Assembly (answered 27 August 2025), which reported for the period 1 August 2024 to 31 March 2025.

1. What is the total 2026–27 Budget allocation for:
 - a. mental health screening within correctional facilities;
 - b. mental health assessment within correctional facilities;
 - c. mental health treatment within correctional facilities; and
 - d. throughcare mental health support following release from custody?
2. Please provide a breakdown of that funding by correctional facility and program, as a table.
3. What is the total 2026–27 Budget allocation for mental health screening, assessment and treatment for young people in the youth justice system?
4. What culturally responsive mental health programs and services are funded for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people in youth detention in 2026–27? Please identify each program, provider and annual funding allocation.
5. Under the current model:
 - a. Are medical practitioners employed directly by the Department of Corrections?
 - b. If not, what are the current employment arrangements for prison medical practitioners?

- c. How do these arrangements differ from those in place immediately before the transfer of responsibility?
6. Since responsibility for prison healthcare transferred to the Department of Corrections, has the number of medical practitioners, nurses and Aboriginal Health Practitioners increased in line with growth in the prison population?
 - a. The answer to Written Question No. 110 reported the Top End region as 0.3 FTE below the 400-patients-per-doctor benchmark. What is the current position against that benchmark in each region?
7. Please provide, for each correctional facility:
 - a. the number of funded positions for medical practitioners, nurses and Aboriginal Health Practitioners;
 - b. the number of occupied positions; and
 - c. the number of vacant positions.
 - d. Where a figure for an individual facility is too small to report, please provide the aggregate by region and the Territory-wide total.
8. In 2025–26, how many medical appointments within correctional facilities were:
 - a. scheduled;
 - b. completed; and
 - c. not completed?
 - d. If these counts are not recorded — the answer to Written Question No. 110 declined to provide them as “too administratively onerous” — what data does the Department collect to manage clinic capacity, and why are attendance counts not routinely recorded?
9. Of the appointments not completed, how many were cancelled or missed due to:
 - a. staffing shortages;
 - b. prison lockdowns;
 - c. prisoner movement restrictions; or

- d. other operational reasons?
10. What policies or operational procedures ensure prisoners continue to receive timely healthcare during prison lockdowns?
 11. What assessment has the Department undertaken of the impact of prison lockdowns on access to healthcare?
 12. How many prisoners received a comprehensive medical assessment by a medical practitioner following reception into custody, and what proportion of the current prison population has received one?
 13. What is the current median and average waiting time between admission to custody and completion of a comprehensive medical assessment?
 - a. What is the longest current waiting time?
 14. How many prisoners are currently waiting for a forensic mental health assessment by a psychiatrist?
 15. The answer to Written Question No. 110 stated that “there is no wait time for a forensic mental health review in the prison setting”. Does that remain the case?
 - a. How is that measured, and what were the median, average and longest times between referral and completed assessment in 2025–26?
 16. The answer to Written Question No. 110 stated that NT Health “does not conduct cognitive or neuropsychiatric assessments beyond simple dementia screening tools used in Primary Health Care by General Practitioners”, with referral to specialists if required. For 2025–26:
 - a. For each correctional facility, what access is currently available to neuropsychological assessment, cognitive assessment, assessment for acquired brain injury, assessment for intellectual disability, and assessment for fetal alcohol spectrum disorder — and by whom is each conducted?
 - b. How many prisoners were referred for neuropsychological, cognitive, acquired brain injury, intellectual disability or fetal alcohol spectrum disorder assessment?
 - c. How many of those assessments were completed?
 - d. What is the average time from referral to completed assessment?
 - e. What funding supports prisoner access to these specialist assessments?

- f. Where a figure for an individual assessment type is too small to report, please provide the total across all assessment types.
- 17. What allied health services are available to prisoners, including physiotherapy, occupational therapy, speech pathology, psychology, dietetics and social work?
 - a. For each allied health service identified, what is the current average waiting time for assessment or treatment?
- 18. In 2025–26, how many external specialist or hospital appointments were:
 - a. scheduled;
 - b. attended; and
 - c. not attended?
 - d. The answer to Written Question No.110 stated that providing these counts would require a manual review that was “too administratively onerous”. Are the counts now routinely recorded? If not, why not?
- 19. Of the appointments not attended, how many were unable to proceed due to:
 - a. staffing shortages;
 - b. transport availability;
 - c. security or escort constraints; or
 - d. other operational reasons?
- 20. What measures are in place to reduce the risk of heat-related illness in correctional facilities, particularly in accommodation areas without air conditioning?
- 21. In 2025–26:
 - a. How many heat-related medical incidents were recorded across correctional facilities?
 - b. How many prisoners required hospital transfer or emergency medical treatment as a result of heat-related illness?