

**Question No: 224**

**Question: Mental Health Services**

**Date: 17/11/92**

**Member: Mr BAILEY**

**To: MINISTER for HEALTH and COMMUNITY SERVICES**

1. How many professional and paraprofessional staff are employed in providing services in the mental health services area.
2. How many staff referred to in question 1 were employed in this area in the 1991-92 financial year.
3. What is the budget for employing those professional and paraprofessional staff in the 1992-93 financial year.
4. What positions do these professional and paraprofessional staff occupy.
5. Are any of these positions currently vacant; if so, for how long have they been vacant.
6. Does the Northern Territory government employ private practitioners in the provision of mental health services; if so, why.
7. Since the Tamarind Centre has become a general practice referral centre, have the numbers of clients, excluding those additional clients brought on by the merger of the Cowdy and Melaleuca teams, increased or decreased.
8. What rehabilitation services are offered to clients in Darwin and the Darwin rural area.
9. What are the detail of accommodation options available to clients in Darwin and the Darwin rural area.
10. What is the current availability of rooms at the accommodation referred to in question 9.
11. What counselling services are offered.
12. What mental health services are provided for children in the above areas.

**ANSWER**

1. 136 staff.

2. All positions were filled in 1991-92 at some time in that financial year.

3. Salaries \$ 7 290 000  
Admin & Operational \$ 1 321 000  
Capital Items \$ 143 000  
Other Services \$ 207 000

TOTAL \$ 8 961 000

#### 4. Classification No

Senior Specialist Psychiatrist 5  
Medical Officer 3  
Snr Registrar 2  
Registrar 2  
Nurse 88  
Psychologist 7  
Occupational Therapist 2  
Occupational Therapist Aide 1  
Social Worker 4  
Hospital Assistant 2  
Wardsman 2  
Administrative 15  
Aboriginal Health Worker 2  
Therapist 1

TOTAL 136

5. The exact length of vacancies is not readily available. However, most positions are filled within a reasonable time with the exception of psychiatrists, which remain difficult to recruit. Full staffing is anticipated in 1992-93.

6. Occasionally private practitioners are utilised to meet a special need.

7. Referrals are received from GPs, government and non-government agencies including Community Health Centres, schools and Correctional Services.

There has been a reduced number of direct services provided over the past financial year.

The reduction cannot be contributed solely to the referral process. Many other factors are involved, such as encouraging greater private-sector participation.

8. Rehabilitation services are provided at the Day Centre, located at Parap, and at the Psychiatric Rehabilitation Unit on the Royal Darwin Hospital Campus.

Additional services are provided in the patients' home and at outpatient clinics where that is appropriate.

9. The Manse at Parap comprises 8 beds for transitional living and respite care.

Two other subsidised houses provide accommodation for approximately 3 persons each.

The utilization of mainstream accommodation is encouraged where that is appropriate. This means that existing houses, hostels and boarding houses are used. The concept of mainstreaming is in line with the recently-endorsed National Mental Health Policy, which seeks among other things to reduce the stigma for the mentally-ill by bringing them closer to other community resources.

The Housing Commission has been of great assistance in providing suitable accommodation.

10. Fifteen specialist accommodation. Unspecified number in mainstream

accommodation option.

11. Counselling is an integral component of all mental health services. Counselling, psychotherapy, behavioural therapy and family therapy are standard methods of treatment used alone or in conjunction with psychotherapeutic medications. Multi-disciplinary team members are constantly involved in counselling of some type.

12. The Specialist Child, Adolescent and Family Services are located at Tamarind Centre. Consultancies are provided to urban Community Health Centres.