

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY****WRITTEN QUESTION**

Ms J Carney

to Minister for Health

**Abuse of Hospital Staff**

1. Across the Dept of Health, how many acts of physical aggression against hospital staff were there in 04/05?
2. Across the Dept of Health, how many acts of physical aggression against hospital staff were there in 03/04?
3. Across the Dept of Health, how many acts of verbal aggression against hospital staff were there in 04/05?
4. Across the Dept of Health, how many acts of verbal aggression against hospital staff were there in 03/04?
5. Across the Dept of Health, how many acts of sexual aggression against hospital staff were there in 04/05?
6. Across the Dept of Health, how many acts of sexual aggression against hospital staff were there in 03/04?
7. Has there been any analysis done as to where hot-spots of abuse are located and if so, where are the identified hot spots?
8. Do single-nurse stations have a higher incidence of this type of behaviour by the public?

**ANSWER**

1. 137\*
2. 103\*
3. 494\*
4. 142\*
5. 0
6. 0
7. Royal Darwin Hospital (RDH) has a number of strategies to minimise and manage poor patient related behaviour. These range from zero tolerance signage throughout the hospital campus, aggression management inservices for staff, aggression management policy and 'action plans', looking at the ways we do business and eliminating work methods/issues that may help fuel aggression. The method of reporting abusive behaviour has been improved to encourage and make it easier for busy staff. This data collection methodology has increased the statistics, as stated in the 'Important Notes' comment below.

*\*These figures vary from total incidents of aggression reported in the DHCS Annual Report 2004/05 due to a timing lag in hospital data being reported centrally to DCIS.*

Alice Springs Hospital and indeed the other Territory hospitals, have undertaken similar management measures to those applying at RDH. This has led to a similar increase in reporting.

8. There are no reported incidents of aggression in single nurse stations.

#### IMPORTANT NOTE

In 2004/05, enhancements were made to the methodology of gathering aggression statistics in the workplace. This was achieved with a simplified tick/flick sheet in the ward/clinic. Due to this, a better indication of aggression-related occurrences has been able to be gained for incidents occurring in specific areas of RDH and Katherine.

This should not necessarily be construed as an increase in the occurrence of aggression-related incidents, but as an increase in realization of those occurrences. It is only over time, using the same methodology, that any conclusion can be drawn.