



# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

No. 114

## WRITTEN QUESTION

J Davis to the Minister for Health, Hon Steven Edgington MLA:

### Urban primary health care

1. Is there a fully functioning stroke ward complete with rehabilitation services at RDH?
  - a. If not, are there any plans to install one and in what timeframe?
  - b. If not, why not?

Royal Darwin Hospital has 4 beds for stroke patients, with rehabilitation services provided at Palmerston Regional Hospital.

2. How many people had to be transferred to an interstate hospital to use a hyperbaric chamber while the chamber at RDH was down?
  - a. How many people were transferred for use relating to infection?
  - b. How many people were transferred for use relating to scuba diving decompression sickness?

There were nil patients transferred interstate to use a hyperbaric chamber while the chamber at Royal Darwin Hospital was down.

3. How long is the wait list for non-urgent surgeries at RDH? For example, how long is the wait list for hip and knee replacements?
  - a. Can you explain what is contributing to the delays?
  - b. What strategies are in place to address these delays and how are these strategies evaluated?

As of 30 June 2025, the wait times for non-urgent surgeries is as below:

Vascular surgery	204
Urological surgery	333
Plastic and reconstructive surgery	169
Paediatric surgery	82
Otolaryngology head and neck surgery	603
Orthopaedic surgery	367

Ophthalmology surgery	186
Neurosurgery	100
Gynaecology surgery	171
General surgery	143

The main contributing factor to delays is workforce shortages.

Strategies in place to address these delays include:

- Use of agency and locum staff.
- Strengthen targeted recruitment for identified specialties.
- Increased support for post graduate qualifications for existing staff.
- A NT-Wide intensive Elective Surgery Reform program that is delivering increase elective surgery across all regions, including:
  - improved theatre utilisation;
  - improved community engagement and patient experience; and
  - increased provision of care closer to home.

These strategies are evaluated through regular monitoring and reporting of performance against Key Performance Indicators, waitlist reviews and monitoring and workforce demographics, Full Time Equivalent deficits, and agency staff utilisation against previous months.

**4. How many people are currently in hospital awaiting transfer to a nursing home?**

As at July 2025, there are currently 63 patients in NT Health hospitals, awaiting transfer to a nursing home.

**5. Does the department keep track of how many people are in hospital for highly preventable diseases?**

**a. If not, why not?**

**b. Are there plans to do so in the future?**

NT Health is unable to provide a response to this question, as data is not categorised by highly preventable diseases.

**6. Does the department map access to dental services across urban areas?**

**a. If so, could you please provide a breakdown of how often people living in greater Darwin and Palmerston are able to attend the dentist.**

**b. If any data is available indicating why people are not attending the dentist, please provide it.**

NT Health maps access to public dental services across the Northern Territory for eligible patients.

NT Health does not have visibility of patients accessing private sector and non-Government oral health service providers, as this is private health information held by practitioners and health insurers.

**7. How many dentists are there per 1000 people in the Darwin Palmerston region?**

Based on national registration data, there are approximately 0.47 dentists per 1000 people in the Northern Territory.

NT Health is unable to provide regional breakdown, as data is not provided to this level.