



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

No. 277

WRITTEN QUESTION

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

Top End Mental Health Services (TEMHS) Mental Health Workforce

1. For Top End Mental Health and Alcohol and Other Drug Services (TEMHS), please provide, in table form, for each of clinical psychologists, occupational therapists, social workers, mental health nurses and Aboriginal health practitioners: the number of funded positions, the number currently occupied, and the number vacant.
 - a. Where a figure for an individual discipline is too small to report, please provide the aggregate for clinical staff and the service-wide total.
 - b. If establishment is not maintained by discipline, in which system is it recorded, and in what format?
2. The People Matter Survey results for Top End Mental Health and Alcohol and Other Drug Services are published. Other than restating those published results, what actions has the Department taken in response to the results for TEMHS relating to recruitment, retention, workplace culture and staff wellbeing?
 - a. For each action, on what date did it commence, and who is accountable for it?
 - b. Which measures in the survey does the Department expect each action to move, and by when?
 - c. Have the TEMHS results been the subject of any local action plan? If so, what is its title and date, and will it be provided?
3. What is the current vacancy rate for clinical mental health and alcohol and other drug staff across the system?
4. What funding is allocated in the current Budget to the Graduate Allied Health Mental Health Program?

5. How is the Department of Health ensuring that locally trained psychologists, occupational therapists and other allied health graduates are retained within the Territory public health system rather than moving to interstate services or private practice?
6. Budget Paper No. 3 for 2026–27 reports individuals receiving non-admitted public mental health services at 8,554 for 2025–26 against a target of 9,200, and retains a target of 9,200 for 2026–27. It also reports separations from public acute mental health inpatient units followed by re-admission within 28 days of discharge at 11 per cent against a target of no more than 10 per cent.
 - a. How many of the 8,554 individuals were served by the Top End Mental Health Service, and how does that compare with each of the two preceding years?
 - b. What accounts for the shortfall against the target of 9,200, and what will change to reach it in 2026–27?
 - c. How many people were referred to a non-admitted public mental health service in 2025–26 but did not receive one, and what is the median wait between referral and first contact?
 - d. If waiting times between referral and first contact are not compiled, in which system are referral and first contact dates recorded?