

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

Mr Wood

to Minister for Health and Community Services

Itinerant housing, health and social services

1. How is the Minister addressing the variety of needs of the itinerant population and finding solutions for those suffering with alcohol and other drug problems.
2. What progress has been made so far to address the itinerant population's needs using the combined financial resources of housing, health and social services areas of government in an orchestrated manner to find at least part solutions or satisfactory alternatives to their plight.
3. Has the Minister made the case for establishing an interdepartmental review committee to address the problems and administrative coordination process for question 2.

ANSWER

The Department of Community Development, Sport and Cultural Affairs (DCDSCA) has announced in the 2003-2004 Budget a total of \$5.25M for services such as Community Patrols, Larrakia Hosts, Intervention and Education and includes capital investment for accommodation to assist Itinerants. My Department has been an integral partner in developing the Itinerant project to ensure adequate management of intoxication, assessment, withdrawal and ongoing treatment for this client group. It is intended that this project becomes a NT-wide strategy and regional consultation has commenced.

In Darwin, the Department of Health and Community Services negotiated a contract with Mission Australia in December 2002 to pilot a Community Day Patrol. This service provides the vital role of outreach interventions and referrals during daytime hours from 8.00am, at a time when access to liquor is restricted and therefore, interventions are far more likely to be successful.

My Department is committed to expanding existing patrol and sobering-up shelter services in the very near future as well as an integrated approach to managing long term needs, including chronic dependency.

The Department of Community Development, Sport and Cultural Affairs (DCDSCA) has the coordinating role for the Itinerants Project.