

Question No: 227

Question: Mental Health Services - Katherine Region

Date: 17/11/92

Member: Mr BAILEY

To: MINISTER for HEALTH and COMMUNITY SERVICES

1. What mental health services are offered in the Katherine region of the Department of Health and Community Services.
2. What services are offered by Katherine-based officers of the Department of Health and Community Services to bush areas.
3. What facilities and services provided by the Department of Health and Community Services cater for forensic psychiatry.
4. What facilities are in place to cater for acute care.
5. What rehabilitation facilities are available in the Katherine region.
6. What community education programs and other pro-active community work is conducted in the above areas by the Department of Health and Community Services, or is funded by the Department.
7. What mental health services are provided to children in the above areas in the Katherine region.
8. What counselling services are offered in the Katherine region.
9. Does the Katherine Hospital have a resident medical officer in mental health; if not, why not.
10. If the answer to question 9 is no, is the intention of the Department of Health and Community Services to employ a medical officer in mental health.
11. If the answer to question 9 is no, what service is being offered in place of a resident medical officer.

ANSWER

1. Outpatient assessment and treatment services are provided at the Community Health Clinic. The outpatient services focus on people with acute conditions and those with long-term mental disorders.

The Katherine Hospital general wards admit patients whose condition does not require a specialist ward environment.

Liaison support services are also provided to other agencies.

Assessment and treatment services to the rural area also operate from the Community Health Centre

2. A community psychiatric nurse provides assessment and treatment services to rural communities.

3. Clinical staff in Katherine provide support to the Criminal Justice system. More specialised support is provided by the Darwin-based team where necessary.
4. Acute care is provided either in outpatient clinics or in general hospital wards. Those persons requiring a specialist ward are transferred to Darwin.
5. Rehabilitation services are provided at outpatient clinics and in the patient's residence where that is appropriate.
6. Brochures are distributed to other agencies in the community and made available to members of the public.

Lectures and discussion groups are held.

Mental Health Week and Schizophrenia Week are used to focus on community education.

7. Children have access to outpatient clinics, the wards of the general hospital and where necessary may be referred to Darwin-based services.
8. Counselling services are an integral part of any mental health service. Counselling may be provided alone or in conjunction with other psychiatric treatments.
9. Resident Medical Officers at the hospital provide first-time services to the mentally-ill and are supported by a Darwin Specialist.
10. While visits are satisfactory visiting services will continue.
11. The Katherine hospital has a number of resident medical officers.

The resident medical officers provide services to all patients in the general wards.

A specialist psychiatrist from Darwin supports services to the district.