

ESTIMATES COMMITTEE

Question Taken on Notice

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Date: 15 June 2026

From: Mr Clinton Howe

To: Hon Steve Edgington MLA

Portfolio: Health

Agency: Department of Health

Subject: Demand at Palmerston hospital emergency department

QUESTION:

Can you provide figures as to the demand pressures on Palmerston ED and compare that with either national or other Northern Territory ED demand figures?

ANSWER:

In 2024-25, Palmerston Regional Hospital (PRH) Emergency Department recorded 32,345 presentations.

Across the Darwin region (including Royal Darwin Hospital), the rate of emergency department presentations was 635 per 1,000 population, significantly higher than the national average of 328 per 1,000 population as reported by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. A population based rate specific to Palmerston is not available.

At PRH, 14% of Emergency Department presentations resulted in admission to the hospital, while the remaining 86% were either transferred to another hospital (e.g. Royal Darwin Hospital) or discharged home. This admission rate is lower than the 33% across all Northern Territory hospital Emergency Departments. Of the 86% of patients who were not admitted to PRH:

- 12% were referred to RDH for admission.
- 61% were discharged from the Emergency Department.
- 13% took own leave.