



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

No. 184

WRITTEN QUESTION

J Davis to the Minister for Corrections, Hon Gerard Maley MLA:

Health of People in Custody in the Northern Territory

1. Please provide an age breakdown of the Northern Territory prison population.

a. What percentage of the population is over the age of 45?

15.23%

b. What percentage of the population is over the age of 55?

4.16%

c. What percentage of the population is over the age of 65?

0.87%

2. How has the age breakdown of the Northern Territory prison population changed over time?

a. What percentage of the population was over 45 years of age in 2015?

13.04%

b. What percentage of the population was over 55 years of age in 2015?

3.67%

c. What percentage of the population was over 65 years of age in 2015?

0.41%

3. Does the Department of Correctional Services have a policy or procedure for responding to medical emergencies within correctional centres?

Yes.

a. Will the Minister table any such policy for consideration by the Legislative Assembly?

No.

4. How many medical emergencies (or equivalent incidents, if recorded under another category) have occurred in Northern Territory correctional centres during the past 12 months?

Over the past 12 months there have been 1,221 recorded code blues (medical emergency) in Northern Territory correctional centres.

Records indicate an ambulance was called as a response on 283 occasions for the 2025 year.

5. What palliative care and psychosocial support services are available to prisoners with terminal illnesses in custody?

Prisoners with a terminal illness can be referred to specialist palliative care services at Royal Darwin Hospital or Alice Springs Hospital.

The NT Health Palliative Care team can provide in reach services on referral to the correctional centres, where there is a prisoner with a terminal illness, to provide the appropriate clinical care in coordination with the clinical team within the correctional centres. Palliative care identifies and treats symptoms which may be physical, emotional, spiritual or social at the end of life.

Prisoner Support Officers and Peer Support Officers also provide support and welfare services such as psychological and emotional support.

Upon notification that there is a prisoner with a terminal illness and approaching palliative care, Reintegration and Support Services assist with keeping families connected, supporting special visits and emergency calls. Consideration for further cultural support is also assessed. If the prisoner is transferred to palliative care, Reintegration and Support Services continue to provide support with family connection and support special visits.

6. Does the Department of Correctional Services have a policy governing compassionate release?

No.

a. Will the Minister table any such policy for consideration by the Legislative Assembly?

There is no policy.

b. How many applications for compassionate release have been made in the past 12 months?

Records for applications are not kept.

c. How many applications for compassionate release have been granted?

Nil as there is no policy.

7. How many people have died of natural causes while in custody in the Northern Territory during the past 12 months?

Three people have died of natural causes in 2025 while in custody in the Northern Territory.