

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY**

**WRITTEN QUESTION**

Mr Guyula to the Minister for Health:

**Health tertiary services funding**

- 1. The NT Government funds Miwatj Health to deliver primary health care services. However, it is forced to spend approximately 15% of its primary health care funding to deliver unfunded tertiary services at many sites including Galiwin'ku, Ramingining and Milingimbi as there is no ready access to a hospital at these communities. The types of tertiary services provided by Miwatj that most Territorians would go to a hospital for include:**
  - Any emergency surgery
  - Childbirth
  - Broken leg, arm
  - Heart attack
  - Pneumonia/septic clients/severe lung disease
  - Mental Health patients needing Cowdy Ward - for suicidal patients or individuals with psychosis

**Why is extra funding not provided for these tertiary services which are critical life-saving services?**

Funding for remote health services has been reliant on primary care funding sources from the Australian Government (Grant and Medicare) and Northern Territory Government. Increasing demands for acute care in remote communities has been experienced across the Northern Territory in both NT Health and Aboriginal Community Controlled Health services.

To gain access to tertiary hospital funding models to cater for the increasing acute needs in remote communities is complex. There are associated hospital status requirements such as activity based or block funding mechanisms and reporting, accreditation requirements, staffing requirements etc.

Recently, the Australian Government has commenced the rollout of Medicare Urgent Care Clinics. This model is more aligned to the NT's remote primary care led clinics. Primary care pilots (as remote urgent care clinics) were initially established with Australian Government funding in Maningrida, Wurrimiyanga and Alyangula. The NT will receive funding for three new remote urgent care sites in the near future.

This additional urgent care funding offered by the Australian Government brings the total investment in urgent care in the NT to \$42 million from 2022- 2026.

In addition, we are working collaboratively with our partners in the NT Aboriginal Health Forum to analyse the urgent and emergency care needs in NT and funding options through Medicare, Urgent Care and Hospital Activity Based funding.