

Question on Notice

No. 1197

Asked on 27 October 2022

MS F SIMPSON ASKED THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND AMBULANCE SERVICES (HON Y D'ATH)—

QUESTION

With reference to the average wait time for category 1, 2 and 3 appointments and category 1, 2 and 3 surgery at the Sunshine Coast Hospital—

Will the Minister advise for (a) the current average wait times, (b) the average wait time for 2018- 19 to 2021-22 (reported separately by financial years) and (c) when long wait times for appointments and surgery will be addressed?

ANSWER

The Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service is committed to patient access to safe and timely care. Demand for services is high and has increased year on year. Due to a combination of this demand, significant population growth and impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic, some patients are regrettably outside their recommended wait time.

I am advised by the Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service of the following.

The current average wait times for Outpatient appointments at Sunshine Coast University Hospital, for patients ready for care are:

Average waiting days	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Category 1	15	25	30	53	50
Category 2	121	149	190	103	158
Category 3	182	221	275	224	278

Data source; System Performance Reporting (SPR)

Note: Data for Fiscal year 2023 includes July to September 2022

The current average wait times for Elective Surgery procedures at Sunshine Coast University Hospital, for patients ready for surgery are:

Average waiting days	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Category 1	10	12	14	13	21
Category 2	28	38	38	42	87
Category 3	81	162	174	169	247

Data source; System Performance Reporting (SPR)

Note: Data for Fiscal year 2023 includes July to September 2022

The Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service is committed to patient safety and care and is working hard to improve wait times. Strategies to increase capacity and reduce patient wait times include, recruiting additional Medical Officers and outpatient staff, outsourcing procedures to private providers as clinically appropriate, increasing allied health and nurse led clinics, introducing General Practitioners with Special Interest clinics.

There is also a continued focus on maximising the outpatients Virtual Care model, including leveraging Telehealth and phone appointments and increasing the GP Advice Pathway Model of Care. The Health Service is also progressing with the Continuity of Care Initiative which will provide some specialties with discharge criteria for patients, so that they can be safely returned to their referring GP, which will reduce the volume of review appointments required within the public system.

These strategies are already reducing the number of patients waiting longer than clinically recommended and it is anticipated further improvements to the waitlist will be made as the Health Service continues to deliver on these initiatives.