

Question on Notice

No. 211

Asked on 16 March 2023

MR A PERRETT ASKED THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND AMBULANCE SERVICES (HON Y D'ATH)—

QUESTION

With reference to the Specialist Outpatient waiting list—

Will the Minister provide the following for residents of the Gympie region (i.e. regardless of treating hospital) as at 31 December 2022 (reported separately by the 29 specialties notated on the Queensland Reporting Hospitals Website) (a) the total number of patients waiting for a specialist outpatient appointment and (b) the total number of patients waiting longer than clinically recommended for a specialist outpatient appointment?

ANSWER

Planned care services across Queensland have been significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic over the past three years. This has resulted from service restrictions related to public health measures and workforce impacts during the health system response to COVID-19.

Across Queensland there has been a 46.7 per cent increase in specialist outpatient demand since 2016.

The Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service (HHS) is committed to patient safety and care and providing timely services. They service the majority of Gympie residents seeking access to specialist outpatient appointments, however some patients are serviced by other HHSs.

HHSs are working hard to improve waiting times, including Sunshine Coast HHS. Multiple strategies are in progress including recruiting additional medical specialists where possible, increasing the use of GPSIs (General Practitioners with Special Interest) to augment the medical specialist workforce, increasing the use of Nurse Practitioners and Allied Health Practitioners to manage patients not requiring direct medical specialist input, optimising efficiencies in outpatient departments and conducting regular clinical and administrative audits of waiting lists.

In the quarter of October – December 2022, the Sunshine Coast HHS delivered more than 12,000 initial service events. This is an increase of 4.8 per cent compared to the same quarter the year before.

I have been advised by the department that Gympie residents, as at 1 January 2023, waiting for an initial specialist outpatients service event is as follows.

- Cardiac Surgery - 6;

- Cardiology – 184;
- Dermatology – 94;
- Ear Nose and Throat – 513;
- Endocrinology – 44;
- Gastroenterology – 107;
- General Medicine – 34;
- General Surgery – 325;
- Geriatrics – 10;
- Gynaecology – 326;
- Medical Other – 196;
- Nephrology – 56;
- Neurology – 173;
- Neurosurgery – 46;
- Obstetrics – 19;
- Oncology – 38;
- Ophthalmology – 499;
- Orthopaedic – 835;
- Paediatric Medicine – 214;
- Paediatric Surgery – 43;
- Pain Management – 17;
- Palliative Care – 14;
- Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery – 78;
- Respiratory – 163;
- Rheumatology – 116;
- Surgical Other – 64;
- Urology – 235;
- Vascular Surgery – 49.

I have been advised by the department that Gympie residents, as at 1 January 2023, waiting longer than clinically recommended for an initial specialist outpatients service event is as follows:

- Cardiac Surgery - nil;
- Cardiology – 53;
- Dermatology – 50;
- Ear Nose and Throat – 271;
- Endocrinology – 3;
- Gastroenterology – 60;
- General Medicine – 1;
- General Surgery – 19;
- Geriatrics – 2;
- Gynaecology – 79;
- Medical Other – 70;
- Nephrology – 3;
- Neurology – 107;
- Neurosurgery – 27;
- Obstetrics – nil;

- Oncology – 6;
- Ophthalmology – 308;
- Orthopaedic – 486;
- Paediatric Medicine – 13;
- Paediatric Surgery – 20;
- Pain Management – nil;
- Palliative Care – 3;
- Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery – 36;
- Respiratory – 85;
- Rheumatology – 89;
- Surgical Other – 29;
- Urology – 167;
- Vascular Surgery – 2.