

Question on Notice

No. 1206

Asked on 11 December 2024

MR J MARTIN ASKED MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND AMBULANCE SERVICES (HON T NICHOLLS)—

QUESTION

Will the Minister advise (in a table reported separately by Hospital and Health Service) the number of (a) admissions and (b) attendances of patients to alcohol and drug service centres?

ANSWER

Queensland Health funds the delivery of specialist alcohol and other drug treatment services across Queensland through Hospital and Health Services (HHS) and non-government organisations (NGO) (inclusive of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled Health Organisations).

Most state-funded specialist alcohol and other drug assessment and treatment is delivered in community settings through HHSs and NGOs.

In relation to admissions, from 1 January to 31 October 2024, there were 837 admissions (counted as hospital admissions) to the two bed-based withdrawal units delivered by Metro North and Cairns and Hinterland HHSs.

Hospital and Health Service	Admissions
Cairns and Hinterland HHS	53
Metro North HHS	784
TOTAL	837

In addition to admissions to bed-based withdrawal units provided by Queensland Health, in the 2023-24 financial year there were 2,454 residential rehabilitation and 890 residential withdrawal management episodes of treatment delivered through state funded non-government organisation providers.

For attendances to alcohol and other drug services in the community, from 1 January to 31 October 2024 there were 74,115 service contacts with 21,167 individual patients attending in-person to a HHS delivered alcohol and other drug community-based service for assessment or treatment.

Hospital and Health Service	Count of in-person service contacts	Count of individual patients
Cairns and Hinterland HHS	10,277	2,378
Central Queensland HHS	2,515	1,054
Central West HHS	5	2
Darling Downs HHS	3,661	819

Gold Coast HHS	5,268	1,555
Mackay HHS	1,418	462
Metro North HHS	18,755	6,227
Metro South HHS	12,118	3,838
North West HHS	2,173	514
South West HHS	121	49
Sunshine Coast HHS	6,030	1,134
Torres and Cape HHS	300	88
Townsville HHS	5,717	1,488
West Moreton HHS	2,568	587
Wide Bay HHS	3,189	972
TOTAL	74,115	21,167

I am advised the number of service contacts and individual patients seen in-person by each HHS varies due to a number of factors including population size and demographics like age and gender, availability and access to non-government organisation providers, use of telephone and telehealth services, patient population factors like level of dependence, harms being experienced and readiness for treatment; as well as local and regional issues for service providers, such as challenges in recruiting and retaining a workforce.

I am advised in the Torres and Cape communities, Queensland Health funds one NGO provider in addition to the HHS. In addition to the HHS, in the South-West region, there are two state-funded NGO providers and one NGO provider in Central West. These NGO providers deliver a range of services including community-based counselling, family support, police and court diversion programs and residential rehabilitation and withdrawal management. There are also NGO delivered residential treatment in nearby regions that take people as priority referrals from Torres and Cape, Central West and South-West.

I am advised in addition to the in-person assessment and treatment captured in the above table, Queensland Health also provides confidential telephone and online support through ADIS (24/7 alcohol and drug support). ADIS provides support for anyone concerned about their own or someone else's substance use and is also an option for people who are not ready or prefer not to attend a service in-person due to concerns about access (location or hours of operation) or confidentiality, particularly in smaller regional and rural locations.