

Question on Notice

No. 157

Asked on 6 March 2024

MRS D FRECKLINGTON ASKED MINISTER FOR HEALTH, MENTAL HEALTH AND AMBULANCE SERVICES AND MINISTER FOR WOMEN (HON S FENTIMAN)—

QUESTION

With reference to Telestroke—

Will the Minister provide details about when the service will be available for people needing specialist stroke diagnosis and treatment in regional hospitals across Queensland?

ANSWER

Treatment for stroke is time critical, every minute counts. For eligible patients, the sooner treatment can be provided, the better the patient outcomes. The Queensland Telestroke Service will provide faster diagnosis and treatment of stroke to those who live in regional and rural areas.

In July 2023, I announced \$5.8M recurrent funding to implement a Telestroke service for Queensland. The funding brings Queensland in line with other states in providing a Telestroke service.

I am advised that up to 20 hospitals will be included in the Service when it commences as part of a phased implementation from June 2024. Referral hospitals will be assigned to an implementation phase based on service readiness.

The Queensland Telestroke Service will provide time critical specialist assessment, diagnosis, and decisions about appropriate and effective hyperacute treatment for ischaemic stroke, including assessment for eligibility for thrombolysis or endovascular thrombectomy. The service will also assist in the coordination of patients who require transfer to one of four facilities capable of performing endovascular thrombectomy.

The Queensland Telestroke Service will provide a continuous on-call roster of stroke specialists and using modern telecommunications technology, will link stroke specialists with referring clinicians and their patients. The Service will be hosted by Metro North Hospital and Health Service which will manage the operational and clinical governance aspects of the service.

A governance framework, including a Project Board and Clinical Governance Committee is currently being finalised to oversee implementation of the service. Clinicians from across the state and consumer representatives will be involved in the design and implementation to ensure a robust and sustainable service.

Training and ongoing stroke educational programs will be introduced at referral hospitals to build local capability and capacity, whilst training opportunities for future stroke specialists are incorporated at the host site, The Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital.

The Queensland Telestroke Service will be modelled from the learnings of other successful telestroke services across Australia and will align with work underway to develop the Queensland Virtual Hospital.