

Question on Notice

No. 693

Asked on 23 May 2024

MR B MICKELBERG ASKED MINISTER FOR HEALTH, MENTAL HEALTH AND AMBULANCE SERVICES AND MINISTER FOR WOMEN (HON S FENTIMAN)—

QUESTION

With reference to general anaesthetic imaging—

Will the Minister advise (a) how many appointments are available at the Sunshine Coast University Hospital each week, (b) how many patients are currently on the wait list for general anaesthetic imaging at the Sunshine Coast University Hospital and (c) what the current wait time is for patients referred to the service at the Sunshine Coast University Hospital?

ANSWER

I am advised there are various imaging procedures provided by the Medical Imaging Department, Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service. Generally, there is not a need for general anaesthetic to perform medical imaging studies, and most examinations are provided with the guidance and assurance of the patient.

Medical Imaging examinations under general anaesthetic are only required for a very small portion of the population, typically where the patient is not able to remain still for the examination as the movement results in undiagnostic images. This is most commonly seen in very claustrophobic patients, some children, some patients with disability and those with difficulty lying down due to painful conditions or shortness of breath.

I am advised the Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service currently performs three outpatient medical imaging cases under general anaesthetic each week at Sunshine Coast University Hospital.

I am advised, as at 4 June 2024, there were 48 patients booked for outpatient medical imaging cases under general anaesthetic. All cases have been provided appointment times.

I am advised, as at 4 June 2024, the wait time for an appointment for medical imaging under general anaesthetic for outpatient referrals was three months for high priority outpatient cases and five months for routine outpatient cases. Inpatient and emergency cases are provided as required and agreed to by the treating team and the Anaesthetics and Radiology Departments.

Where there may be a change in a patient's condition, review of the case may occur, and an earlier appointment facilitated based on clinical need.