

Question on Notice

No. 414

Asked on 22 April 2026

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

QUESTION

With reference to surgery waitlist times in February 2026, as listed on Queensland Health's Performance Website—

Will the Minister advise the number of elective surgeries cancelled by either patient or Queensland Health at Townsville University Hospital during the reporting period of February 2025 to February 2026 (in table format, reported separately by individual tables for each month, reported separately by specialty and category, where the y-axis reports the number cancelled and the x-axis reports the specialty and category, with the values provided in the table and not a reference number to a value that sits outside of the table)?

ANSWER

I am advised that cancellations can occur for a multitude of reasons, including: the case being brought forward; patient no longer requires treatment; patient treated elsewhere; a priority emergency or elective case; staffing shortages; availability of beds; and more.

Cancellations can occur as part of the routine changes to scheduling sometimes occurring well in advance of the day of surgery. Therefore, day of surgery cancellations is the most meaningful measure to reflect elective surgery performance.

The Crisafulli Government is improving access to elective surgery and reducing the number of patients waiting longer than clinically recommended timeframes. The Member would be pleased to learn that the Crisafulli Government has invested a record \$1.8 billion investment into Surgery Connect and elective surgery capacity, including in Townsville.

Between February 2025 and February 2026 (inclusive), there were 705 day of surgery cancellations. I am advised that day of surgery cancellations over the last six months of this period are lower than the same six-month periods in the prior two years. The Crisafulli Government has delivered additional theatre capacity at the Townsville University Hospital thanks to the new, state-of-the-art hybrid operating theatre.

To avoid identifying individuals, data is aggregated and counts of less than five are not reported.

Month	Count of Cancellations
Feb-26	42
Jan-26	32
Dec-25	27
Nov-25	39
Oct-25	48
Sep-25	54
Aug-25	63
Jul-25	96
Jun-25	56
May-25	68
Apr-25	60
Mar-25	68
Feb-25	52
Total	705

Specialty	Count of Cancellations
Cardiothoracic surgery	95
Ear Nose and Throat surgery	63
General surgery	85
Gynaecology	<5
Neurosurgery	31
Not Specified	25
Ophthalmology	31
Orthopaedic surgery	110
Paediatric surgery	9
Plastic and Reconstructive surgery	70
Urology	135
Vascular surgery	49
Total	705

Category	Count of Cancellations
Category 1 - Admission within 30 days	371
Category 2 - Admission within 90 days	244
Category 3 - Admission within 365 days	90
Total	705