

Question on Notice

No. 435

Asked on 23 April 2026

MR M HEALY 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 Cairns Hospital during the reporting period of February 2025 to February 2026 (inclusive) (in table format, reported in 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 Cairns.

Between February 2025 and February 2026 (inclusive), there were 400 day of surgery cancellations. This is a reduction from 523 day of surgery cancellations between February 2023 and February 2024 (inclusive).

Month	Count of Cancellations
Feb-26	35
Jan-26	31
Dec-25	21
Nov-25	26
Oct-25	36
Sep-25	29
Aug-25	39
Jul-25	38
Jun-25	39
May-25	34
Apr-25	27
Mar-25	21
Feb-25	24
Total	400

Specialty	Count of Cancellations
Ear Nose and Throat surgery	13
General surgery	79
Gynaecology	52
Not Specified	12
Ophthalmology	10
Orthopaedic surgery	89
Plastic and Reconstructive surgery	48
Urology	41
Vascular surgery	56
Total	400

Category	Count of Cancellations
Category 1 - Admission within 30 days	183
Category 2 - Admission within 90 days	141
Category 3 - Admission within 365 days	76
Total	400