



QUESTION TIME
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FOR THE
AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

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Thursday, 4 April 2019

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Standing Committee on Health, Ageing and Community Services

Statement by Speaker

MADAM SPEAKER: Today Ms Cody gave written notice of a possible breach of privilege, alleging that confidential proceedings of the Standing Committee on Health, Ageing and Community Services had been released to the *Canberra Times*. Upon receiving the letter, I subsequently wrote to Ms Cody pursuant to standing order 242, seeking their views as to whether the matter raised by Ms Cody had interfered with the inquiry. I also asked the committee to seek to discover the source of the alleged release of confidential proceedings. The committee replied to me indicating that it had a tendency to substantially interfere with the work of the committee.

Under the provisions of standing order 276, I must determine, as soon as practicable, whether or not the matter merits precedence over other business. If, in my opinion, the matter does merit precedence, I must inform the Assembly of that decision and notify the member who raised the matter with me. That done, the member may move a motion in accordance with standing order 81A to refer the matter to a select committee appointed by the Assembly for that purpose. If, in my opinion, the matter does not merit precedence, I would inform the member in writing and may also inform the Assembly.

I am not required to judge whether there has been a breach of privilege or contempt. I can only judge whether the matter merits precedence. Having considered the matter, and also the views of the committee, I have concluded that the matter does merit precedence over other business.

I understand that there is no motion before us, and standing order 81A says that there needs to be 90 minutes. I inform the Assembly that at some point we will be coming back to this matter.

Questions without notice

Government—Canberra Helicopters

MR COE: My question is to the Chief Minister. As you are aware, Canberra Helicopters, currently based at Canberra airport, is looking to establish a world-class helicopter training facility in Hume. Despite the ACT government supposedly supporting the concept, discussions continue with a lack of resolution. In the three years since the first direct sale application was made, why is it that the government still cannot give the necessary approvals for this project, despite the proponent desperately wanting to make the investment?

MR BARR: I will seek an update in relation to these matters. I will take the question on notice and provide information to the Assembly in due course.

MR COE: Chief Minister, what is your awareness about what is being proposed and how many international visitors, trainees, jobs and other investments have we lost due to the length of time it has taken to get this project approved?

MR BARR: I am aware that there have been some discussions and I have had some limited briefing on the matter by the proponent but I am not intimately involved in the commercial negotiations and the matter has yet to come before cabinet.

MR WALL: Chief Minister, do you agree that this is an example of the kind of investment that should be fostered and encouraged in Canberra?

MR BARR: I am certainly open to these sorts of investments but direct sales, by their nature, exclude others from the potential to utilise public land for either similar or other purposes. They are the exception rather than the rule, and there should be no assumption that a direct sale will automatically be granted on the basis of an unsolicited proposal to government. We have a framework for assessing these proposals and it is appropriate that they are assessed in that way. That sometimes means that it takes longer than proponents would like. But I am sure that the opposition would be in favour of rigorous due process in the direct sale of public land to any commercial proponent.

Minister for Social Inclusion and Equality—responsibilities

MS LE COUTEUR: My question is to the Minister for Social Inclusion and Equality. Given that there are also ministers for disability, children, women, seniors, veterans, Indigenous affairs and multicultural affairs, what is the role of the Minister for Social Inclusion and Equality?

MR BARR: I thank Ms Le Couteur for the question. The portfolio has responsibilities in a number of different areas, but particularly from a whole-of-government perspective. One aspect of work that I have been particularly focused on in this area is the development not only of the social inclusion statement, as part of the annual budget papers—and there have been a number of those now that I would draw Ms Le Couteur’s attention to—but equally the work that we are undertaking in developing a series of new indicators—indicators of progress, community wellbeing and the like—associated with work that is underway in New Zealand, on which we are collaborating with the New Zealand government, and, indeed, with other Australian jurisdictions. In fact we will be looking at broadening our measure of community progress, of economic progress—beyond the more traditional means that are commonplace in public debate in this nation, things like gross domestic product, rates of economic growth and the various measures that are more commonly reported in terms of economics statistics—to include other measures within the purview of government responsibilities, and, where we can, provide a richer source of information on community wellbeing.

The portfolio also has specific responsibility in relation to social inclusion matters that are related to the ministerial advisory council on LGBTIQ affairs. I have responsibility for that matter, as well as for a number of other social inclusion priorities. I think it is important to have this whole-of-government perspective, and that is why the portfolio sits within my responsibilities.

MS LE COUTEUR: Chief Minister, can you tell us what the government uses as its definition of “social inclusion” and what its priority areas are?

MR BARR: I refer the member to the published statements and, indeed, the administrative orders.

MS CHEYNE: Chief Minister, are voluntary assisted dying and territory rights also a priority for you under these portfolio responsibilities?

MR BARR: Yes, these matters, of course, cross over multiple portfolios but certainly touch on questions of social inclusion and equality. I think it is important, in the context of the structure of the administrative arrangements and the government's progressive agenda, to note that having social inclusion and equality at the forefront of our policy development and having specific programs and activities that are also supported under that portfolio, as are outlined in the administrative arrangements, reflects not only the importance of this area to the government but, indeed, to the majority of Canberrans who value social inclusion and equality very highly.

Schools—student insurance

MS LEE: My question is to the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Development: does the Education Directorate provide insurance cover for students who are injured or contract illnesses whilst at an ACT government school or on a school-organised excursion and what are the conditions and/or the circumstances under which coverage is offered?

MS BERRY: Yes, some insurances are provided particularly around excursions interstate and to sports centres in other districts but also here in the ACT. I will get some more detail on the specifics of the question and provide the Assembly with that information.

MS LEE: Minister, are there any circumstances in which the government would refuse to offer insurance coverage for injuries which occurred within an ACT government school or on an excursion? And if so, what are those circumstances?

MS BERRY: I just would not know the answer to that question today. If there is a specific circumstance that Ms Lee is referring to then perhaps if she were to be in touch with my office I could respond to that in more detail. I will have to get some information for Ms Lee if that circumstance would ever arise.

MR WALL: Minister, do ACT government schools encourage, advise or require parents to take out personal injury cover for their child when undertaking activities at school or on school-organised excursions? If that is the case, can you please explain why.

MS BERRY: I am not aware of that occurring. If the opposition is aware of a circumstance where that has occurred then they should possibly get in touch with my office or the Education Directorate so that we can respond directly.

Parking—Palmerston

MR MILLIGAN: My question is to the Minister for Planning and Land Management. There is an ongoing saga of insufficient parking at Palmerston shops.

For more than two years residents and business owners have complained about this issue, and some of those business owners are here today. Most recently Minister Steel responded to a question on notice saying that new parking will be constructed and that he had referred the matter to your portfolio. Minister, when will works commence on providing the much-needed additional parking at Palmerston shops?

MR GENTLEMAN: I thank Mr Milligan for his question and those in the gallery for their interest. I do not have the detail in front of me but I will take the question on notice and come back with the detail.

MR MILLIGAN: Minister, why is your office refusing to speak with, make an appointment to meet with or email local businesses at Palmerston shops?

MR GENTLEMAN: I was not aware that my office had refused to meet with or email people from Palmerston shops. I will take that up with the office and come back to the chamber on it.

MR COE: Minister, in light of that response, will you now take the opportunity to meet with these business owners here, today, after question time?

MR GENTLEMAN: I would be happy to meet with the people from Palmerston shops. Unfortunately, I am paired immediately after question time. I will talk to my office and we will allocate some time.

Education—Margaret Hendry School

MS ORR: My question is to the minister for education. Minister, how are the school facilities at Margaret Hendry School providing students with a great opportunity to learn?

MS BERRY: I thank Ms Orr for her interest in Margaret Hendry School. At the beginning of the school year I had the chance to welcome students starting for the first time in our newest school, Margaret Hendry School in Taylor. It is clear that the community in North Gungahlin was eagerly awaiting the opportunity to join this school and access the great opportunity to learn that it offers, with around 250 students enrolling in the 2019 year.

The school is an excellent example of what modern design and innovative thinking can achieve in providing great facilities for school education. Gone are the days of dark, square box classrooms and the narrow corridors of the past. The Margaret Hendry School is an inviting open-plan building with lots of glass providing views of the surrounding reserves. On the grounds of the school is a significant tree that has been incorporated into the schoolyard as a focal point.

Inside the building, significant attention has been given to how teachers use the spaces to facilitate learning. There are spaces resembling traditional classrooms, although more open and adaptable to allow teachers to work in teams. As you move through the building's wings there are breakout places for small groups and one-on-one learning, integrated sensory spaces and outdoor classrooms. All of these spaces are fitted out with modern technology that enables access to learning.

It truly is a grand design. The school is also the first community facility delivered by the government in Taylor, including two playing fields. The wider community will also be able to hire the school hall, oval and meeting rooms for a range of activities and gatherings.

MS ORR: How has the government built sustainability into this school?

MS BERRY: The Margaret Hendry School will be the first ACT public school to produce zero emissions in its operation in that it sources its energy requirements from electricity alone. The school showcases how sustainable design principles can achieve cost and energy efficient schools to support the ACT's target of zero net greenhouse gas emissions by 2045.

The range of initiatives used to ensure that the operation of Margaret Hendry School is carbon neutral include: 110-kilowatt solar panels to reduce demand on the electricity grid; automated LED lighting with integrated motion sensor control to save power; double glazing to reduce the need for heating and cooling; electric-booster solar hot-water to provide low cost, zero emission hot-water; external shading to keep learning environments naturally cooler; and an air-conditioning system which can transfer heat from one part of the building to another as well as a cooling system that flushes cool night air into the school building during summer to reduce the need for cooling during the day.

Additional carbon reduction strategies are being rolled out in existing schools, and these include roof-mounted solar panels in public schools, LED lighting upgrades, insulation and glazing upgrades and sustainable transport options, as well as involving students and teachers in sustainability programs.

I was joined by the minister for climate change when I visited this school. One of the most exciting moments that the children had was tricking the lights by standing very still in the room, which meant that the lights could not detect that they were there.

MR PETTERSSON: Minister, how is the Margaret Hendry School meeting the growing needs of a growing region?

MS BERRY: More than 49,000 students attended public schools across Canberra this week, including those who joined the city's newest school, Margaret Hendry School. This modern facility is the 88th public school in the ACT and will cater for 176 preschool and 600 primary school students, providing capacity for quality public education in this high growth region. The planning also allows for the accommodation of an additional 150 primary school students through future expansion if it is required to cater for growth.

In addition to Margaret Hendry School, capacity across the Gungahlin region will be increased by a further 1,200 places by 2022. This is being delivered through the expanding schools in Gungahlin and more places in Gungahlin schools programs.

The 2017-18 budget included an allocation of \$24.072 million over four years for expanding schools in Gungahlin, including \$18.6 million for Gold Creek School

junior campus, Neville Bonner Primary School, Harrison School junior campus, Palmerston District Primary School and Franklin Early Childhood School.

A further \$19.83 million over four years was announced in the 2018-19 budget for more places in Gungahlin schools. This will fund further expansion works at Gold Creek School as well as Neville Bonner and Amaroo junior and senior school sites. I look forward to continuing to deliver on our investments in schools and in education.

O'Malley—unauthorised activities

MRS JONES: My question is to the Minister for City Services. Minister, I refer to a letter dated 4 March 2019 sent to you by multiple residents of Bulwarra Close, O'Malley. In this letter residents have highlighted what they believe to be the unlawful use of a residential property for controlled activities as well as dangerous line-of-sight issues because of illegal parking in their street. Minister, what have you done to investigate the matter?

MR STEEL: I thank Mrs Jones for the question. I will take the question on notice.

MRS JONES: Minister, what action will you or your government take to ensure that laws relating to controlled activities are being enforced?

MR STEEL: I thank Mrs Jones for her question. We work with a range of agencies, including Access Canberra, in relation to enforcement of controlled activities on land around Canberra. I am happy to provide some further detail on notice in relation to the specific site.

MR HANSON: Minister, is it acceptable that one month after sending this letter residents have still not received a response?

MR STEEL: I will chase up the response.

O'Malley—illegal parking

MR HANSON: My question is to the minister for regulatory services. For many years, residents of Bulwarra Close, O'Malley have had to put up with cars swamping their street, mostly due to workers at the embassies and cultural offices in the area. This includes cars parking in front of driveways, blocking access and even preventing residents from entering and exiting their own driveways. Minister, given that their reports to Access Canberra go unanswered, what options are left to residents when cars park illegally across their driveways and in their street?

MR RAMSAY: I thank the member for his question. Matters in relation to the enforcement of parking are matters that the parking inspectors in Access Canberra do pursue. I would certainly encourage people to contact Access Canberra and—

Mr Hanson interjecting—

MADAM SPEAKER: Mr Hanson, let the minister finish.

MR RAMSAY: also the fix my street website. When Access Canberra and the parking inspectors follow through on those—and they do—they do so on the basis of a risk-based compliance model, making sure that matters of safety are dealt with first. If, at any stage, members of the public believe that there is a matter of safety, I would certainly encourage them to contact Access Canberra and to refer specifically to a matter of safety. I know that at that stage it is prioritised.

MR HANSON: Minister, when is the government going to start enforcing parking restrictions in Bulwarra Close?

MR RAMSAY: I will take on notice the frequency with which the parking inspectors have already been out there and I am happy to provide updates. Certainly, the inspectors are out right across Canberra. As I say, they are doing so on the basis of risk-based compliance and making sure that matters of safety are dealt with as a priority.

MRS JONES: Minister, since the introduction of parking restrictions in Bulwarra Close how many parking infringement notices have been issued?

MR RAMSAY: I do not have that information in front of me but I am certainly happy to take that on notice and provide further information.

Roads—Monaro Highway

MR PETTERSSON: My question is to the Minister for Roads. Minister, what benefits will upgrading the Monaro Highway provide to Canberra?

MR STEEL: I thank Mr Pettersson for his question. I was really delighted to announce the release of the design tender for one of the ACT government's major road projects just last month. The Monaro Highway upgrades represent major safety improvements to one of the key major road corridors for Canberra and our region.

The Monaro Highway upgrades are supported by a commitment of up to \$100 million from the ACT government to match commonwealth funding. The upgrades will be designed to make our roads safer, improve traffic flow and capacity and augment this important freight corridor. This is particularly important because we know that currently 24,000 vehicles use this road each and every day and this will grow to 35,000 by 2031. Improving traffic flow and safety on this route will have significant local and regional benefits.

The first improvements on the stretch of the Monaro south of Canberra with detailed design work for an overtaking lane and median barrier treatments will occur on Royalla Drive and Williamsdale Road. Designs will look at best options for a northbound overtaking lane approximately one kilometre in length as well as various treatments that could be used to further separate north and southbound traffic, particularly heading down to the snow during the winter season. It is anticipated that construction of the overtaking lane and median improvements in that area will commence in the 2019-20 financial year.

Construction on other sections of the Monaro around Canberra is anticipated to occur

in later years, and a key consideration of this work will be to minimise the impacts on road users. I look forward to keeping Canberrans updated on the progress of the final design work to improve safety and traffic conditions on this important road corridor, particularly for the south side.

MR PETTERSSON: Minister, how will these upgrades improve traffic flow for south-side Canberrans?

MR STEEL: The Monaro Highway is a major freight and tourism route, and it also carries a large number of commuters from Queanbeyan, Jerrabomberra and Googong as well as Canberra's southern suburbs. These upgrades will improve traffic flow for Canberrans on the south side by providing a consistent speed limit and reducing the bottlenecks that currently slow down commuters on the road.

The Monaro Highway is a highway, but it currently has multiple at-grade signalised intersections right along it and also some roundabouts. Many of these intersections are bottlenecks which see congestion at peak times. This will only get worse as the population of our region grows. This also results in speed having to be inconsistently reduced to 80 kilometres an hour, particularly around Hume and the Alexander Maconochie Centre, for safety reasons. If we do not address this future congestion on the Monaro, it will hold back south-siders from getting to work and getting home to see their families of an evening, and decrease the efficiency of our freight route linking with the Majura Parkway.

I know that Ms Le Couteur expressed a different view on this project yesterday, but it is entirely legitimate for the aim of these upgrades to be to safely provide a consistent speed of 100 kilometres an hour from Johnson Drive to Hindmarsh Drive on what is a major highway for our region. And we will improve traffic flow for south-siders by looking at removing traffic lights, roundabouts and other intersections and looking at whether these could be replaced with grade-separated interchanges to keep Canberrans moving.

MS CODY: Minister, would the Monaro Highway ever intersect or link with a future Monash Drive?

MR STEEL: I thank Ms Cody for her supplementary. It will be impossible for the Monaro Highway ever to link with Monash Drive under our government because we will never build Monash Drive. Monash Drive, as set out in the National Capital Plan, is a four-kilometre road from Antill Street down to Fairbairn Avenue.

It is planned to plough through predominantly tree-covered reserves bordering Hackett, Ainslie and Campbell, which would result in the loss of or disturbance to areas of existing yellow box and red gum grassy woodland ecological communities located within the Mount Ainslie and Mount Majura nature reserves, reserves that are home to 40 threatened species, including the glossy black cockatoo, the superb parrot and the little eagle.

There are also 141 known listings for Aboriginal sites and potential archaeological deposits that have the potential to be impacted by the construction of Monash Drive. I have visited some of those myself in just the past few years. This fictitious road would

be environmentally damaging, is unnecessary and is expensive, and it should never be built by any future government.

I have written to the National Capital Authority asking them to remove this road from the plans for our city, which they have rejected. I now call on the federal Liberal government to reverse their decision, which would also result in increased traffic using local streets in Hackett and Watson, as well as some streets in Reid, such as Coranderrk Street and Anzac Parade.

Child and youth protection services—placement policy

MRS KIKKERT: My question is to the Minister for Children, Youth and Families. Minister, a comparison of the CREATE Foundation's 2013 and 2018 surveys shows that this government's child protection system has consistently been ranked low in some areas but that in some areas it has actually worsened, such as placement stability and disrupting a placement against a child's wishes, awareness of transition plans, and overall satisfaction. Minister, what specific factors have caused the ACT to decline from third in the nation to dead last when it comes to mean placement stability and removing children from placements against their will?

MS STEPHEN-SMITH: I thank Mrs Kikkert for the question. I was very pleased last week to attend the launch of the CREATE Foundation report in the ACT and to have an opportunity to talk to the report's author and to hear from CREATE, and an excerpt from a young person on their experience in out-of-home care. I regularly meet with young people, including CREATE's young consultants, and we have other opportunities to meet with young people.

It is a good question as to what has caused changes in the outcomes. Surveys are, of course, a difficult thing, because people are self-selecting in terms of who responds to the survey. But these are very serious issues and ones that we take very seriously. That is why we held a youth roundtable with young people in November 2018 to hear from them exactly what their experience of the out-of-home care system is. Their concerns aligned with both those expressed in the CREATE report and those expressed in the AIHW's national survey report, that is, young people want better information about decisions that are being made and they want to be involved in those decisions. That goes directly to the point that Mrs Kikkert is making about decisions about where those young people live.

We did also hear some interesting information at the CREATE launch about how information was gathered in different states and territories. It is clear that the way the information was collected in the ACT was slightly different from other jurisdictions. That may have had an impact; nevertheless we take the outcomes of that report very seriously.

It was heartening to hear from the young person that his current situation is one where he is seeing a very positive future for himself as a result of his positive interactions with his case worker and his Australian Childhood Foundation worker and he has a very clear transition plan.

MRS KIKKERT: Minister, how do you account for the fact that no 15 to

18-year-olds in the 2018 survey reported being aware that they had a transition plan out of care?

MS STEPHEN-SMITH: I thank Mrs Kikkert for the supplementary. When I heard that on the radio, I was obviously concerned about that. But having looked at the report, it is clear that a small number of young people indicated that they believed they did not have a transition plan. The vast majority of young people in the ACT survey said they did not know whether they had a plan or not.

One of the things that I spoke to the researcher about was the language that we use when we talk to young people. Discussing transition from out of home care is a sensitive topic and a difficult one to have conversations with young people about. I had this conversation last year with ACT Together as well regarding the language that we use with young people and the conversations that caseworkers have with them, whether or not young people are clear that the conversations they are having with their caseworker actually relate to a transition plan, and something that is called a transition plan.

What is clear is that caseworkers need to be having those conversations. Again this came out in the youth roundtable: young people want genuinely to be told what is happening in their plans, even if those conversations are difficult for them. They want to be able to be given time to consider the information that they have received, and to respond to it in a considered way rather than giving their first, immediate reaction, which, the young people at the roundtable acknowledged, may be an emotional reaction. They want to have time and opportunity to consider the information that they are given, and they want to properly understand the context of that information.

I believe it is not the case that young people do not have transition plans; it is the case that, with respect to the way those conversations are being held with young people, they do not necessarily understand that the conversations they are having with their caseworker are contributing to a thing called a transition plan.

MS LAWDER: Minister, why has children and young people's overall satisfaction plummeted nearly 25 per cent over five years for the ACT, which is in contrast to other jurisdictions' results?

MS STEPHEN-SMITH: I thank Mr Lawder for her supplementary. As I said, these are complex results and we will be having further conversations with young people, both those currently in out of home care and those who have had an experience of care, to further discuss the challenges that they are experiencing in the system.

As I said, it was very heartening to hear from one young person and Create's ACT director, Susan Pellegrino, who clearly indicated that 15 months ago this young person was having a very difficult time and probably would have provided very negative feedback to a survey like this. Today, thanks to the dedicated support from his caseworker, his Australian Childhood Foundation worker, he has hope for the future, he understands where he is and he can see a positive future for himself. This is the very difficult work that CYPS caseworkers, ACT Together, the Australian Childhood Foundation and all of our partners undertake, working with young people who are in very difficult circumstances. We are absolutely committed to ensuring that

their voices are heard, and heard better, both in their individual circumstances and in relation to building a stronger system to keep young people strong, safe and connected.

Child and youth protection services—review

MR WALL: My question is to the Minister for Children, Youth and Families. The Glanfield inquiry stated that a review should be undertaken of what decisions made by child and youth protection services should be subject to either internal or external merits review and that the review should have regard to the position in other jurisdictions. On 17 August 2017 you told this Assembly that the ACT government had commenced this review. On 27 June last year it was stated in estimates hearings that a paper reporting the findings of this review was, to use your word, imminent. Minister, has this report of the review been completed?

MS STEPHEN-SMITH: I thank Mr Wall for the question. Unfortunately this piece of work has been delayed. A draft discussion paper has been prepared. It is a piece of work that JACS is responsible for developing and there has been conversation between JACS and the Community Services Directorate.

I have given very clear direction that this piece of work must be developed in the context of the ACT government's commitment to the ACT as a restorative city. I hesitate to say that the discussion paper is imminent, but it is close. Obviously this review will not be finalised without consultation. The direct answer to Mr Wall's question is no, it has not been finalised because obviously it would be the subject of consultation.

MR WALL: Minister, why is it taking so long for the government to prepare this simple review that was recommended three years ago? Given that you stated in estimates that it was "imminent", do you believe that you have misled the Assembly?

MS STEPHEN-SMITH: No, I do not believe that I misled the Assembly. At the time it was my understanding that this work was imminent. There has obviously been a very significant policy load in a range of policy areas, across both the Community Services Directorate and the Justice and Community Safety Directorate, including in responding to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

This piece of work is not simple. This is actually a very complex piece of work, in understanding what other jurisdictions do and comparing that to the ACT system, in trying to really understand what the options are for the ACT and how we should present those in a way that people who are going to respond to this review can understand. While acknowledging that we want to hear from people who have direct experience in the system, we need to be able to explain our options and our system in plain English to those people. This is not a simple piece of work. I am disappointed that it has taken this long to get done, and I am looking forward to the discussion paper being released.

MRS KIKKERT: Minister, what is your government trying to hide by delaying this report and who will be involved in the consultation?

MS STEPHEN-SMITH: The answer to the first part of the question is nothing; and there will be a public consultation.

Health—prescription monitoring

MS CODY: My question is to the minister for health. Minister, can you provide an update of real-time prescription monitoring in the ACT?

MS FITZHARRIS: I thank Ms Cody for this question. I am delighted to provide an update to the Assembly on the rollout of this very important real-time prescription monitoring. As we know, across Australia there is a growing problem with the misuse and abuse of prescription medicine. We are committed to minimising harms caused by this.

Today I am pleased to provide an update on what members may have seen recently, which is that health professionals now have access to essential information about their patients' use of controlled medicines to assist them in identifying and reducing potential harms for their patients and, in turn, for the broader community.

Through the ACT government's secure online prescription monitoring website, known as DORA, practitioners can now identify potential cases of doctor shopping, help to minimise other risks associated with the prescribing of controlled medicines, and help health professionals, particularly doctors and pharmacists, to identify unusual patterns of use for controlled medicines, patterns which could suggest a risk of harm to their patient or to the broader community.

I am delighted that the ACT is the first jurisdiction to have made this level of progress towards real-time monitoring, and feedback from a wide range of stakeholders has been very supportive. DORA is available to all registered prescribers, which includes doctors, dentists and nurse practitioners, as well as pharmacists, to support ACT patient care.

Within weeks of this program going live, 61 practitioners had already registered for access to commence use of the system as a new and very important part of delivering high quality patient care for all Canberrans.

MS CODY: Minister, can you outline how this system minimises the harms associated with misuse of prescription drugs?

MS FITZHARRIS: This means that ACT health practitioners are now able to find essential information about their patients' use of controlled medicines, which provides an extra level of protection for patients. DORA provides access to information about controlled medicines that represent the greatest risk of abuse, misuse and diversion, including strong opioid medicines such as morphine and oxycodone which can be used to control severe pain, and stimulant medicines such as dexamphetamine which can often be used to treat attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.

In the previous financial year 2017-18 the health protection service sent approximately 2,400 monitoring letters to prescribers in response to alerts generated by its drugs and poisons information system, or DPIS, the precursor to DORA. Whilst

effective at detecting misuse this system does not give health professionals access to their patients' dispensing history before making the decision to prescribe or dispense a controlled medicine. DORA now enables that to occur.

This complements other safeguards the ACT already has in place to help protect the public from potential harms arising from the abuse and misuse of controlled medicines in the community, including the requirement for prescribers to apply to the Chief Health Officer for approval to prescribe a controlled medicine for their patients and the need for pharmacies to submit information to the ACT Health Directorate for all controlled medicines dispensed to their patients.

MS CHEYNE: Minister, can you please outline how the government worked with stakeholders to ensure that the implementation of DORA is supported in the ACT?

MS FITZHARRIS: The implementation of DORA demonstrates what can be achieved by bringing together stakeholders from across the ACT healthcare system to develop these types of solutions to support patients right across our community. Working with stakeholders has ensured that DORA is a user-friendly and valuable tool that clinicians want to use and that communications and training materials for health professionals and consumers are appropriately targeted and effective to ensure maximum uptake and outcomes from the system for our community.

ACT Health established a DORA stakeholder engagement group to advise government on DORA's system features and functionality as well as the successful communications and engagement approach to DORA's rollout. The group comprised local representatives of the ACT's peak health professional groups. Without the support of these groups, we would not be seeing the positive interest in, engagement with and early uptake of DORA by local health professionals that we are seeing today.

I take this opportunity to thank all the stakeholders, particularly including the ACT Pharmacy Guild and their membership base and the Capital Health Network, for the invaluable contribution they have made to developing DORA.

While the ACT government remains highly supportive of a national real-time prescription monitoring system, it has taken far too long. A national monitoring system is expected to be implemented later this year. DORA is ready to plug into that system as soon as it is implemented.

ACT Health—SPIRE project

MRS DUNNE: My question is to the Minister for Health and Wellbeing. I refer to an annual reports brief on ACT Health infrastructure projects including the surgical procedures, interventional radiation and emergency building or SPIRE which states:

The 2016 election commitment stated that SPIRE was planned to open in 2022-23. This was prior to any feasibility, planning and early design works being undertaken.

Minister, why did the 2016 election commitment on SPIRE go ahead without any feasibility, planning or design work having been done?

MS FITZHARRIS: We are very proud of the SPIRE commitment, including what it will deliver for Canberra patients and the professionals working at Canberra Health Services. It certainly, as any election commitment—and I believe the costings document indicated this—needs to go through a formal process.

Of course we took this incredibly important commitment to the ACT election. The ACT community supported that commitment by re-electing this government. We are well on the way through the feasibility design and planning process and we very much look forward to completing that.

Mr Hanson: It's a con job.

MADAM SPEAKER: Be very careful, Mr Hanson.

MRS DUNNE: Minister, when will the feasibility studies, planning and design work on SPIRE be completed?

MS FITZHARRIS: As I announced last year, that work is well underway. I also announced last year the final location on the Canberra Hospital campus of the SPIRE building. This is an exciting location on the Canberra Hospital campus.

Mr Hanson: A con job, wasn't it?

MADAM SPEAKER: Mr Hanson. Minister, resume your seat. I think we have had some discussion about this, and the word “con” has been allowed, but I have also asked you to be very mindful of your language. I think that it does imply that there was some level of dishonesty in that, so I ask you to withdraw it, unconditionally.

Mr Hanson: I am tempted not to, but I will. I withdraw, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER: If you do not, you will be shown the door. Have you withdrawn? Thank you.

MS FITZHARRIS: I am delighted by the opposition's interest in this. Certainly, I look forward to further updates for the Canberra community, particularly as we move towards our own budget. Certainly, it is the case that there is considerable work underway, and particularly clinical engagement at Canberra Hospital. That work will continue.

MR HANSON: Minister, were any of your other 2016 health policies made without having undertaken feasibility, planning or design work, or is this special?

MS FITZHARRIS: I must say about our incredibly comprehensive health platform that we took to the ACT election: the one difference with our health election platform was that it was the one supported by the Canberra community.

Sport—McKellar Park

MR PARTON: My question is to the Minister for Sport and Recreation. Minister, it

has been reported that night soccer matches at McKellar Park have been cancelled following complaints from two residents about the lights. A government spokesperson has said that there has not been a ban. Minister, can you guarantee that if the lights are turned on, the soccer club will not receive a fine or penalty notice?

MS BERRY: The McKellar soccer pitch is owned by the McKellar club, not the ACT government. They are responsible for the lighting.

Opposition members interjecting—

MADAM SPEAKER: Could you let the minister answer the question.

MS BERRY: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I think I have heard that there have been some complaints, but I just do not know what has happened as a result of that and I do not even know that they have come to my office. What I am saying is that I am aware of this situation as far as the lights are concerned, but I was not aware that they were being turned off or that there were threats of any fines or anything at the club.

MR PARTON: Minister, in regards to what you are and are not aware of, are you aware that stakeholders at McKellar Park have been threatened with fines of up to \$22,000?

MS BERRY: No, I am not aware of that situation. If Mr Parton has any information with which he could enlighten my office I can pursue the matter and investigate what is going on.

MR MILLIGAN: Minister, what precedent does this closure of McKellar Park for night-time matches set, on the basis of two complaints, for other sportsgrounds in Canberra?

MS BERRY: As I said, I am aware that an issue has occurred. I am not aware that the lights were turned off as a result of complaints. I will find some more information about this particular issue, if I can. If Mr Parton or Mr Milligan has any other information on this to provide to my office, I will find out what is going on and see if we can get to the bottom of the issue.

Light rail—disability access

MS LAWDER: My question is to the Minister for Transport. Minister, did your directorate undertake any consultation with community-based disability organisations about access to the light rail? If so, what was the nature of that consultation, and with whom and when did it take place?

MS FITZHARRIS: Yes, we certainly have throughout the course of this project. Recently a series of confidence days has been held. Some may be continuing this week. There was close engagement throughout the planning and there have been recent confidence days with a number of different stakeholder groups, including, very importantly, the disability community. I will take the specifics on notice and provide more detail to the Assembly.

MS LAWDER: Minister, are all light rail vehicles and associated stops fully disability compliant? If not, why not?

MS FITZHARRIS: It is absolutely the case. I believe that the confidence days were indeed to make sure that compliance is assured, and that members of the disability community and other community organisations have an opportunity to experience it and provide feedback.

MRS KIKKERT: Minister, how many front-line officers will be permanently there at the light rail stops when it begins running to assist people, including those with disability, to board and use light rail?

MS FITZHARRIS: I believe I was asked this question in a recent question time and I took that on notice. And I will do so again.

Planning—Kippax master plan

MS CHEYNE: My question is to the Minister for Planning and Land Management. Minister, what are the benefits to the community of the Kippax master plan?

MR GENTLEMAN: I thank Ms Cheyne for her question and for her interest in and advocacy for Kippax. I am very pleased that the master plan has been completed. It provides a great opportunity for a bit of expansion of Kippax itself but also it reflects the community consultation that occurred during the master planning process. I look forward to being able to do some further community consultation as we move out in any regard around Territory Plan variations for Kippax.

It recalls some fond memories for me. My first boy was born and grew up originally in Holt. He had his first excursion from home, if you like, at the age of 1½ down to Kippax. And I understand that the Deputy Chief Minister used to rollerskate through Kippax. I am looking forward to further consultation with the community.

MS CHEYNE: Minister, what community engagement took place in the development of the Kippax master plan?

MR GENTLEMAN: Community and stakeholder engagement has played an important role in the development of the master plan with the ACT government engaging extensively with local residents, businesses, community groups, private interest groups and government agencies. Community engagement on the master plan included four stages to provide the broader community with numerous opportunities to provide feedback to keep them informed about the development of the master plan.

This government believes that people should be able to have their say over decisions that affect them. We will continue to work with the community as we implement the Kippax master plan. The next step in implementation through Territory Plan variations will, as I mentioned before, provide opportunities for the community to have their say in the variation process.

MS ORR: Minister, how does the Kippax master plan affect open space in the region?

MR GENTLEMAN: The master plan recommends rezoning part of the existing Holt and district playing fields and, for the potential expansion to respond to the need for additional commercial space in the group centre, the master plan requires that any potential loss of existing open space associated with future retail expansion be offset through the upgrading of and investment in community and sporting facilities across the centre, resulting in better outcomes for the community. This includes reinstating existing unused playing fields in other locations close to the centre, which may include upgrading turf, irrigation, a new pavilion perhaps and lighting and seating. Future decisions about the land use will be taken on a case-by-case basis with the community at the heart of those decisions.

Mr Barr: I ask that all further questions be placed on the notice paper.