



QUESTION TIME
OF THE
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
FOR THE
AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

HANSARD

Edited proof transcript

Tuesday, 13 May 2025

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Questions without notice

Canberra Health Services—data security

MS CASTLEY: My question is to the Minister for Health and relates to reporting in yesterday's *Canberra Times* that a Canberra Hospital worker has been charged with stalking and threatening to murder a colleague. The story reports that the worker was employed as a cleaner and "used his position to access the woman's medical records". Minister, why would a cleaner be able to access personal and private medical records?

MS STEPHEN-SMITH: I am not able to comment on a matter that is currently before a court. That matter is sub judice.

MS CASTLEY: Minister, why isn't the \$458 million Digital Health Record system able to prevent unauthorised access to medical records?

MS STEPHEN-SMITH: I have a sneaking suspicion that Ms Castley is mixing up two articles, but, again, I am not able to comment on any matter that is currently before a court. Those matters are sub judice. And I do not believe that Ms Castley actually has any evidence to support the assertion that she has made in her question.

MR COCKS: Minister, do you have systems to track unauthorised access to patient records?

MS STEPHEN-SMITH: Yes.

Transport Canberra—bus driver safety

MS CASTLEY: My question is to the Minister for Transport. Last year, I asked if you were only taking action on the safety of bus drivers in response to the threat of a strike. You said no and added, "We are committed and we are getting on and delivering on it." Yet the local TWU secretary, Klaus Pinkas, told ABC radio last week that the government was not, in fact, getting on and delivering on it, and so drivers were once again considering a strike. Now another strike is in the offing, will you actually deliver on driver safety?

MR STEEL: I thank the member for her question. I made that statement because we were the only party at the election that had committed to do a range of things to help prevent and address occupational violence being faced by our bus drivers. We did that because we met with the driver workforce and their representatives of the Transport Workers' Union, who had raised concerns, and we committed to undertake a range of actions.

We have since been meeting and consulting through Transport Canberra, and also myself and my office, with the Transport Workers' Union in relation to the implementation of the four agreed actions. The key one that the Transport Workers' Union is particularly interested in is the installation of Perspex screens in our bus fleet to help prevent violence, which is totally unacceptable for anyone, in any workforce, in any workplace in the ACT, including in our buses and in our interchanges. We have ordered those screens, and they are due to start being fitted out on the Transport Canberra fleet from June. We informed the TWU earlier this month that they had been

ordered, and I was pleased to provide Mr Pinkas with an update on 7 May that they would start to be fitted in June. We are getting on with the work that we said we would do. We are taking action, and that order also follows extensive engagement and consultation on the design of the screens to make sure that they were fit-for-purpose for the workforce before we made the order.

MS CASTLEY: Minister, was Klaus Pinkas wrong when he said of your government, “They spend all this money on a new ticketing system, they’re quite happy to, but not prioritise their employees’ safety, which is quite frankly horrendous”?

MR STEEL: Well, I do disagree, Mr Speaker, with that statement because firstly, the ticketing system helps to fund a sustainable revenue base to make sure we can support drivers, including for things like occupational violence and to make sure we can deliver the services that Canberrans rely on, that they also support. So that is important. Of course, we are investing at the same time in taking action on occupational violence: whether it is the preventative measures with Perspex screens being fitted out through the order that we have already made for the Transport Canberra fleet; whether it is the legislative powers that the government currently has under consideration that we will look to bring to the Assembly as soon as we can; whether it is the work that is happening in relation to de-escalation training that will kick off from the middle of this year for the workforce; as well as, of course, the work that we are doing to look at how we can provide a team of transport officers, which was a commitment that we made at the election that we are currently considering as well. So we will continue to work with transport workers and their representatives to deliver on the commitments that we made and that you did not.

MR COCKS: Minister, was Klaus Pinkas wrong when he said of you, “All’s been promised, nothing’s been delivered”?

MR STEEL: I disagree with that statement because we have taken action by actually ordering the Perspex screens and they will be delivered in June.

Gambling—clubs inquiry

MR RATTENBURY: My question is to the Minister for Gaming Reform. Minister, the tender documents to conduct the inquiry into the future of the ACT clubs industry were issued on 23 April. The tender closes on 20 May. What are the criteria by which the respondents to the tender will be assessed as suitable to win the tender and conduct the inquiry?

DR PATERSON: The tender process is an independent procurement process, and the terms of reference, as the member outlined, were released through this public process. In terms of the criteria for who will be appointed, that will be in terms of who has the expertise and the relevant understanding of the ACT context to be able to lead the inquiry into clubs.

MR RATTENBURY: Who did the government consult in developing the criteria and terms of reference for the inquiry?

DR PATERSON: Clubs ACT and the Alliance for Gambling Reform.

MR BRADDOCK: Can you confirm that you have abolished the Community Clubs Ministerial Advisory Council?

DR PATERSON: Yes, I can. I wrote to members of the council, and that ministerial council, which was set up last term, will not continue.

Light rail—construction impacts

MS CASTLEY: My question is to the Minister for Transport. This morning, the minister announced support for businesses around London Circuit who have been significantly affected by roadworks associated with light rail over the last five months. Minister, why has it taken you so long to act?

MR STEEL: I thank the member for her question. It has not; we have had in place for some time a business partnership for the light rail stage 2A project that outlined a range of initiatives and supports that the ACT government would provide. But we also knew that we would need to continue to work with and listen to businesses in the corridor, particularly as the construction ramped up. That has now become very real for the businesses in the corridor, particularly on London Circuit, in the last few months.

Through the most recent engagements through the City Construction Group, where we have those business stakeholders coming along to provide feedback to the ACT government, we have been able to act on a range of their suggestions, which were practical and agreed by the ACT government, and we were pleased to deliver an updated package that builds on the existing business partnership plan that we had in place.

MS CASTLEY: Minister, was the months-long delay because you were hoping federal Labor would bail out the ACT government and provide support to affected businesses?

MR STEEL: I thank the member for her question and refer her to the answer that I have already provided. The answer is really, no, because we had already acted. Canberrans escaped a bullet two weekends ago, and the hospitality industry and the broader business community also escaped a bullet, in the form and shape of the Liberal Party. People are thanking God that they were not elected two weekends ago, because it would have smashed their businesses, with 15 per cent of the workforce being retrenched. What impact would that have had on the ACT economy?

Mr Cocks: Mr Speaker, I raise a point of order on relevance. The question, as much as it touched on federal Labor, was not with regard to any other policy other than funding for this particular community.

MR SPEAKER: Mr Steel, I have a view that perhaps you have drifted off from the base of the question. Do you have anything more to add?

MR STEEL: I have already answered the question; thank you.

MR MILLIGAN: Minister, are you aware of any other issues where ACT government actions were delayed in the hope of securing federal support? If so, could you please

provide a list on notice?

MR STEEL: I reject the premise of the question.

Teachers—working conditions

MR HANSON: My question is to the Minister for Education. Minister, I refer to various reports about teacher retention in schools, including a recent *Canberra Times* article entitled “‘Completely outrageous’: Why Canberra teachers are quitting teaching”. One teacher says, and I quote:

The amount of pressures and the things we were being asked to do, the amount of time we were being asked to spend, the money we were being asked to spend on resources ourselves was just completely outrageous.

Another stated, in response to the article, “We’re beyond the point of quick fixes,” and that it is “conditions—not compensation—driving people out”.

Minister, is it the case, as these teachers are saying, that it is conditions for teachers in ACT schools that are completely outrageous?

MS BERRY: I thank Mr Hanson for the question. It is true that our teachers do an incredible job across a range of different areas. They are being asked to use their professional expertise to teach children to learn, but also, in addition to that, sometimes they are put into the role of psychologist, of carer, of looking for housing support—a range of different jobs they are required to do, particularly where young people are coming to school with more complex needs and have complicated lives. There is a lot of pressure put on our teaching staff, when their profession is to teach; that is their expertise.

The ACT government has recognised that and is working with the Education Union to reduce workload. Things like buying things for your classroom with your own money are not okay and should not be occurring in any of our schools. There are funds available within school budgets to be able to purchase items that are required at schools, so I do not have any expectation for teachers or other school staff to be purchasing things out of their own pocket. That is a very clear message from me, and I know it is a very clear message from the Education Union as well.

MR HANSON: Minister, why after 23 years of Labor government are teachers complaining about the conditions in schools?

MS BERRY: Thank you. I would have to say that a lot has changed over the last 23 years, and particularly over the last five years. The complexities that our teaching workforce have had to manage have included a workforce crisis resulting from a range of different circumstances, particularly COVID; this has had an impact on different workforces but particularly on the teaching workforce. We have had an aging teaching workforce, so we are seeing more people leaving the system and we are having to recruit new and beginning teachers to our profession. So there are quite a few things that have changed over the years that we have not had to struggle with or work towards in previous years.

However, I am confident and absolutely committed to working with our teaching workforce and all our school staff—from school cleaners, BSOs, LSAs and teachers to school leaders and principals—to make sure we have the best possible environment for our teachers to be able to do what they have been taught to do, which is to give our children the best possible chance at a great education.

MR MILLIGAN: Minister, what is government doing that is beyond the quick fixes that obviously are not working for teachers?

MS BERRY: There are no quick fixes, but we have a significant recruitment program where we are continuously recruiting, across the country, new and beginning teachers to move to the ACT. In addition to that, we are working with the Australian Education Union, the principal's association and teachers on a workload reduction program of works to make sure we can hear and understand the kinds of workloads that have been addressed by schools over the last period of time that we must address. Also, we are looking at the workforce and seeing what it is that we need to do to support our teaching professionals, particularly by putting in programs of work like our inclusion coaches in Tuggeranong, which we started rolling out last year, that have had a huge impact on the workload of school staff and have also had a positive impact on young people with complex lives and disabilities, as well as their families. Those are the kinds of things that we are rolling out.

There is no silver bullet with that kind of work; it is a journey, and we will have to be on it together. It will take some time to deliver and to make sure that we get it right, but at the end I think it will make a change to our schools for the positive and will give teachers the time that they need to do their jobs.

Teachers—working conditions

MR HANSON: My question is to the minister for education. Minister, an education expert, in response to a *Canberra Times* article, noted that there is a “disconnection between policy and practice”. He stated:

... decisions are often made far from the classroom, with little understanding of the daily reality. Teachers are left to implement reforms they had no voice in shaping.

Minister, why do teachers feel that decisions are still made far from the classroom?

MS BERRY: I would accept that that might be the experience of some teachers, and I am sorry if that is the case. I have been strongly recommending to the Education Directorate that they work very closely with all stakeholders in our school communities in forming policies. We worked very closely with stakeholders in the disability space, to work on our inclusion strategy over the last year, as well as on our Stronger Foundations. Mr Hanson brought a motion to the Assembly around literacy, and we agreed to include numeracy in that task force work. We are now rolling out that policy, in very close communication with all of our schools.

We have a significant workforce in our school communities, and we need to contact each one, one at a time, and often regularly, to tell them what is going on, because they are busy at school doing their jobs. But we are committed to making sure that they are part of the conversations on solutions to any of the issues that are being raised in our schools. There is no point in pushing policies or change on schools unless we are working together to implement them.

MR HANSON: Minister, what responsibility do you take for experts on the front line raising concerns that decisions are being made that are remote from the classroom, with little understanding of reality?

MS BERRY: I have probably taken that question in my first answer, and accepted responsibility. Sometimes the communication might not be as ideal as it should be, but we are committed to listening, and to making sure that we make it as extensive as possible and include as many people as possible in any decision-making that the Education Directorate does.

I can provide another example. We will be going out shortly to look at sponsorship and corporate donations to our schools, which we were already rolling out, starting this year, and looking at the policy around that. There will be a serious conversation with a range of different stakeholders, and particularly our schools and students, about what that might look like, with respect to different sponsorship for individual schools from large organisations. That will be an important piece of work that will go out in YourSay, not only for community consultation but also directly with our school communities, to understand exactly what sponsorship means to them, and how we implement a policy going forward that is modern and meets the needs of our schools.

MR MILLIGAN: What will you change to address the disconnect between policy and practice in your directorate?

MS BERRY: I have said what we are already doing, which is working hard to listen to everybody who wants to be part of a conversation about schools.

Mr Hanson: It's not happening, though, is it?

MS BERRY: I have heard what Mr Hanson has said, and I give that message again to our school communities that they are absolutely welcome, and I encourage them, particularly our teaching and learning professionals, to reach out through the Education Directorate, their schools, ACTPA, the Education Union, or more directly through my office, so that we can work together to make our schools the best they can possibly be.

Early childhood development

MR EMERSON: My question is to the Minister for Children, Youth and Families. In 2021, the ACT recorded the second-highest level of child developmental vulnerability in Australia, at 26.7 per cent, behind only the Northern Territory. While other states and territories have experienced a decrease or only a marginal increase since 2015, the Australian Early Development Census shows that the ACT recorded a 4.2 per cent increase. Minister, has the ACT's rate of child development vulnerability improved since 2021?

MR PETTERSSON: I thank Mr Emerson for the question. I will take that on notice.

MR EMERSON: This might need to be taken on notice too. Does the latest data show that the ACT's levels are now in line with or better than the rest of Australia?

MR PETTERSSON: I will take that on notice.

MISS NUTTALL: Minister, what work has the government done to support developmentally vulnerable children?

MR PETTERSSON: I will take that on notice as well. The reason for that is that a range of ministers are responsible for these matters. This does not neatly fit within my portfolio responsibilities, but I will take those questions on notice and get a fulsome response back.

Roads—Woden town centre

MS CARRICK: My question is to the Minister for Planning. Minister, Corrina Street in the Woden Town Centre is routinely congested with traffic, queuing back from the entrance to the Westfield underground car park. This congestion often stretches through the roundabout and all the way north, past the library as far as Launceston Street, as well as along Brewer Street and out onto Melrose Drive, blocking access. What is your policy for identifying congestion problems and what action has the government taken to address this poorly planned access point?

MR STEEL: I thank the member for her question. I think she said Corrina Street. As part of the planning system, there are referral entities that are consulted with when new developments are proposed as part of the planning assessment process. Transport Canberra and City services would be consulted particularly on traffic impacts associated with any new development that is planned in the town centre. That would look at the streets that are impacted, whether it is directly next to the development or closer by, and they would provide advice for the Territory Planning Authority, the independent authority, which would make a decision in relation to an individual development application.

In relation to broader planning, yes, traffic considerations are taken into account with the planning work that is undertaken at a more strategic level and through the development of the district strategies. So the broader potential changes to the Territory Plan would need to consider the impacts on road traffic in particular. The ACT government's approach through the Transport Strategy has been to see a significant investment in public transport to make sure there are sustainable forms of travel to move more people more efficiently around the city as it grows. The great thing about more people living in mixed use development in town centres in particular is that it provides those people with access, direct access to public transport, which those centres are well serviced with. So that is part of the sustainable approach that we are taking to transport, not just to focus on road transport, but a range of other sustainable modes as well.

MS CARRICK: What action has the government taken to ensure this traffic congestion does not continue to worsen as the population density in the town centre and around the

region densifies, include the densification of Athllon Drive through to Tuggeranong. This is about getting into the carpark under Westfield through Corrina Street and the massive traffic congestion.

MR STEEL: I thank the member for her question. As I mentioned, we are investing in mass transit solutions like light rail. I would hope that as a fellow member for Murrumbidgee, Ms Carrick would support that project in the Assembly. It is one that will provide better access to frequent public transport. We have seen the benefit of that in the city, where it reduced congestion on Northbourne Avenue.

Ms Carrick: Point of order.

MR SPEAKER: Point of order. Mr Steel if you can just be seated and stop the clock please. Ms Carrick.

Ms Carrick: This is about traffic congestion into the underground carpark underneath Westfield, not about light rail.

MR SPEAKER: I think there is a genuine point of order on relevance because we are talking about within Woden Town Centre.

MR STEEL: I thank the member for her question. All of these forms of travel work together. Light rail is a congestion buster. That is what it does. It encourages more people to use sustainable forms of transport like public transport, and we are encouraging walking and cycling, including on Corrina Street where we installed a new bi-directional cycle lane to encourage safe active travel use. So all of these modes work together to take more cars off the road so that those who have to drive are not facing higher levels of congestion. That has to be the focus because we cannot duplicate, or triplicate, or quadruplicate our roads out of this problem. Hindmarsh Drive, for example, which is nearby, faces significant congestion in the peak times and that will continue as our city grows. But it is already a six lane road so you cannot add more lanes and hope that it will have a different outcome. So, the solution that we have is to invest in sustainable transport options. We have done that on Corrina Street with active travel and we are doing it in Woden Town Centre with the investment that we are making in light rail and by strengthening rapid bus services as well with the election commitments that we have made.

MR COCKS: Minister, has the government—I am guessing I might know the answer here—has the government had any conversations with Scentre Group about redesigning access to the Westfield Woden underground carpark to reduce the traffic congestion in that immediate area?

MR STEEL: I will take on notice to find out whether there has been a specific discussion amongst officials with Scentre Group. Obviously part of the land I think the member is referring to, and knows it is owned by Scentre Group, which operates the Westfield Centre, the former Woden Plaza there. I will take that on notice. It does sort of fall into Minister Cheyne's portfolio in the road space as well. So I will be happy to find out whether there is some further information that we can provide.

Youth homelessness—Our Place Braddon

MISS NUTTALL: My question is to the Minister for Homes and New Suburbs. Minister, one week ago I asked you when you would be able to advise the young residents of Our Place if the ACT government funding for their service would be continuing. At the time, it was seven weeks until their funding was due to expire. It is now six.

To draw a comparison, the Residential Tenancies Act requires eight weeks' notice to terminate a lease if a landlord intends to sell the property or move in themselves. If the Our Place residents were under the Residential Tenancies Act, then the minimum time period for advising them of a terminated tenancy would not have been met. What is an acceptable time period to advise these young people if they can continue to live at Our Place?

MS BERRY: I thank Miss Nuttall for that question. I think I made myself clear—as clear as I could be without breaching any cabinet or budget confidentiality—last week. That is what I will continue to do. As soon as I can, I will let the community know—particularly Barnardos tenants and Barnardos themselves—about the project, the contract and the funding for that work going forward.

Miss Nuttall: Mr Speaker, I have a point of order on relevance, if that is okay. The question was specifically asking what an acceptable timeframe is. I am not sure I had an answer to that.

MR SPEAKER: Unless the minister wants to add more, I think she has made an attempt to answer the question. She is not moving, so I do not think there is any more! Miss Nuttall, do you have a supplementary question?

MISS NUTTALL: Minister, what is the absolute minimum timeframe for the contract renewal for Our Place that could come through the cabinet budget process?

MS BERRY: I guess, if you were talking hypothetically, you could assume that a contract could be renewed on the day that the contract finishes. That would be the hypothetical circumstance. That is not where I want to be. However, as I said, I am not able to provide a response until the matter goes through the budget processes. At that time—or earlier if I am able to—I will provide that certainty to Barnardos and the tenants who live there.

MR RATTENBURY: Minister, do you know how many young people have left Our Place already, given the uncertainty of its funding?

MS BERRY: I have not been advised that there are any people leaving Barnardos, but if that is the case it would be concerning. I will follow up with Barnardos and via Housing ACT and the manager of that contract. But I certainly have not been advised. If Mr Rattenbury or Miss Nuttall are aware of anybody leaving because of this specific circumstance—I have never said that the contract would not be continued, but I have not yet been able to confirm whether it would. I have made that clear.

Health—infrastructure

MS TOUGH: My question is to the Minister for Health. Minister, you have announced the South Tuggeranong Health Centre construction commencement and the establishment of new operating theatres at Canberra Hospital. How will these health infrastructure investments expand access to health care for Canberrans?

MS STEPHEN-SMITH: I thank Ms Tough for the question. I was delighted in the past week to mark important milestones for our significant health infrastructure investments: construction commencement of our new South Tuggeranong Health Centre, which will bring vital health services to the South Tuggeranong region, and the opening of the dedicated operating theatres at Canberra Hospital for our obstetrics team, which will support mothers, birthing people and babies.

Last week, Ms Tough and Mr Werner-Gibbings were with me in breaking ground on the construction of the South Tuggeranong Health Centre in Condor. Design of the \$16.6 million health centre has been shaped by extensive engagement with clinicians and the local community. Eleven consultation rooms and a flexible layout will support a range of health services, providing localised and multidisciplinary care. Services will include paediatrics, pathology, dementia care, a diabetes clinic, falls and falls injury prevention, chronic disease programs and a virtual care specialised space.

On Monday this week, we launched the dedicated operating theatre complex for obstetrics at Canberra Hospital, made possible with a \$5.5 million investment. These dedicated operating theatres are larger in size and will improve the Canberra Hospital's capacity for both emergency and scheduled obstetrics procedures. This will be particularly valuable when complications arise during birth, because these theatres remain close to the Centenary Hospital for Women and Children.

These projects are part of our larger investments in health infrastructure—our largest investment since self-government—including the \$640 million Canberra Hospital expansion, with the Critical Services Building opening in August last year; nearly \$70 million of investment in our health centres; and more than a billion new Northside Hospital.

MS TOUGH: Minister, what other investments is the ACT government making in health centres and public hospital infrastructure across Canberra?

MS STEPHEN-SMITH: I thank Ms Tough for the supplementary. We have demonstrated our commitment to delivering high-quality health care and infrastructure when and where Canberrans need it by investing in the infrastructure required for our growing population. ACT Labor took to the election a practical, progressive health infrastructure plan for our regions—something those opposite and, indeed, on the crossbench failed to do for Canberrans.

Construction of the new health centre in South Tuggeranong is the first of four new health centres for the ACT that will provide multidisciplinary health services and provide access to care closer to home, particularly for people with complex and chronic care needs. We are, of course, also in the final stages of construction on the \$8.5 million southside hydrotherapy pool, which will deliver rehabilitative and supportive care in the community.

At Canberra Hospital, we are continuing to deliver improvements across the campus with the new Yamba Drive entrance Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander lounge and veterans lounge, which will open in the coming months. We are also delivering state-of-the-art equipment upgrades, a new acute palliative care ward, endoscopy suites and a comprehensive cancer centre. We are also continuing planning to deliver the Canberra Hospital Master Plan to redevelop the campus over time, supported by a more than \$21 million investment.

Construction will commence shortly on the \$49 million Watson Health Precinct, which will deliver modern facilities for Marymead CatholicCare, Ted Noffs and Winnunga Nimmityjah to deliver essential community-based health services.

The more than \$1 billion Northside Hospital represents the single-largest investment in health infrastructure and will include state-of-the-art facilities, a bigger emergency department and intensive care unit and more operating theatres. Our very early contractor involvement with delivery partner Multiplex is in place, and they are working with our teams to prepare concept designs and early works for the new hospital.

MR WERNER-GIBBINGS: Minister, how will the ACT Labor government's health infrastructure investments support the Canberra community and the health workforce?

MS STEPHEN-SMITH: I thank Mr Werner-Gibbings for the supplementary and Ms Castley for her efforts. Delivering and investing in state-of-the-art facilities and infrastructure has been central to our comprehensive plan for health services in the ACT. We are ensuring innovations in our health facilities create accessible spaces that support Canberrans and our health workforce. We are delivering state-of-the-art facilities with the latest medical technology. A more than \$45 million investment in upgrading equipment across our public hospitals has ensured that our consumers and health workforce have access to modern resources that will improve health outcomes.

The new Critical Services Building was, of course, the first all-electric major hospital building in Australia and contains features, designed closely with consumers, that have, in fact, changed the Australasian Health Facility Guidelines for everyone. We have also increased productivity in the emergency department, with the installation of Australia's first automated pathology sample delivery system. We will continue to deliver those innovations in the new Northside Hospital and focus on working with consumers and carers throughout the project. We will also deliver a new facility for child and adolescent mental health services, the Cottage Program, through the Northside Hospital project, which will support young people in our community to access more intensive mental health supports.

We will continue doing all of this work in collaboration with our fabulous clinicians and the consumers who use our services and their carers.

Midwifery—continuity of care

MS CLAY: My question is to the Minister for Health. I would love an update on how we are going to meet our increased midwife-led continuity of care targets. In 2023 the

Assembly agreed to my calls, and community calls, to set a target that 75 per cent of women and birthing people should have access to midwife-led continuity of care by 2032. Where are we up to now?

MS STEPHEN-SMITH: Thank you Mr Speaker, and I thank Ms Clay for a long enough question that I was able to find the right piece of information for! As Ms Clay would recognise, the first target that we are looking to meet is a target of 50 per cent of women and birthing people having access to a continuity model of care by 2028. So in preparation for the expansion of continuity of care, CHS has drafted a maternity model of service that paves the way for CHS to operate as one single maternity service across the two sites. As part of that, and in engagement with the workforce—who I really want to thank for their engagement in this process—the continuity of care model will be reviewed, ensuring improved access and equity.

CHS is also currently consulting on the intake point for maternity models of care across the network, and implementing improvements to intake will also ensure increased equity of access and consistency across the network as well.

In addition, CHS is currently researching and consulting on alternative and appropriate models for continuity of care—and as Ms Clay would understand, there are a number of models of care that count as continuity in the maternity space—so this will ensure a sustainable and expandable model of care that improves outcomes and that can be implemented to meet our targets.

Finally, there is a commitment in the enterprise agreement to review schedule 3, which covers continuity of care. The commitment states that the head of service and the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation agree to conduct a comprehensive joint review of all matters related to the Special Employment Conditions—Continuity of Care Midwifery Model set out in the nursing and midwifery enterprise agreement. That review will enable the—*(Time expired.)*

MS CLAY: Do you have any reports looking into how we will be working to meet the target and when will you be releasing those reports?

MS STEPHEN-SMITH: Thank you. I will take the detail of that question on notice, Mr Speaker. I will just finish in relation to the review of the EA, because that may be relevant to the question that Ms Clay is asking in terms of review.

The review is intended to enable the territory to consider alternative continuity employment models, and that is really important in ensuring that our workforce is sustainable in continuity. Currently, the employment arrangements are quite restrictive, but we did recently do some work to ensure that graduates could work in the continuity of care model, and that has been really welcomed by our workforce.

MISS NUTTALL: Minister, what consultation have you done and with whom?

MS STEPHEN-SMITH: There has been some significant work in consultation with our midwifery workforce. And again, I want to thank the midwives and the Office of the Chief Nursing and Midwifery Officer, who have engaged in this process of review—as well as our executives, who have supported that work. What they have

really tried to do is to ensure that that work is led and supported by the midwives and that we are being guided by them, but also by the experience of consumers. Of course, part of our Maternity in Focus changes have included the implementation of more formal feedback-seeking from people who have given birth in our public health system to understand their experiences so that we can foster that continuous improvement.

Domestic and family violence—safe houses

MS MORRIS: My question is to the Minister for the Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence. Minister, I have been contacted by women escaping domestic violence who are concerned for their safety in designated safe houses. One woman felt so unsafe that she fled from her designated safe house and sought refuge in a McDonald's, where she spent the night. The woman told me that her so-called "safe house" was no better than the domestic violence situation she had escaped. Minister, is the government aware of and concerned that some women escaping domestic violence are saying they feel just as unsafe in safe houses? If so, what are you doing to ensure their safety?

DR PATERSON: I thank Ms Morris for the question. In relation to the specific circumstances that Ms Morris has raised, there has been collaborative work between my office and Minister Berry's office to understand the exact circumstances of that person. I absolutely commend the work of safe houses and our services that provide housing to women and children throughout our community. I believe that these services work above and beyond to provide safe housing. We, as the ACT government, will support those services, and work with them to ensure that the housing and services that are provided to those women and children are safe. I appreciate Ms Morris raising the issue of this circumstance with us, and we will work to resolve that.

MS MORRIS: Minister, why do women escaping violence feel unsafe in so-called designated safe houses?

DR PATERSON: I do not want to demonise safe houses. I think this is a one-off experience. I appreciate Ms Morris raising that with me and with Minister Berry, and we will work to understand what is going on in this circumstance.

MS CASTLEY: Minister, is it appropriate that women escaping violence are subject to substance abuse, male visitations and violent behaviour in designated safe houses?

DR PATERSON: I think your question is inappropriate, in that you are demonising safe houses, which are there to protect women and children. There is a one-off circumstance, and we are working with Ms Morris on that circumstance. We are working to understand that situation, which I understand is very complex. I want to assure the community that our safe houses are there to support women and children escaping violence.

City and government services—cycleways

MR BRADDOCK: My question is to the Minister for City and Government Services. Minister, a constituent has drawn attention to the deteriorating conditions on the C2 is an industrial area adjacent to Oaks Estate that was the subject of a debate earlier in this

sitting period. There, the cycle path suddenly disappears, forcing cyclists onto a poorly-maintained road alongside a large volume of heavy vehicle traffic. Given that the answer to question on notice No 118 states that zero dollars for new constructions was included in the most recent budget, for 2025-26, which would apply to such missing links through Beard, when can users of this section of the C2 cycle route expect a safe, fully dedicated cycle path to be installed?

MS CHEYNE: I apologise, Mr Braddock. I do not have that information in front of me, so I will take it on notice.

MR BRADDOCK: How does the government plan to install missing links when there are zero dollars allocated in the budget for such new constructions?

MS CHEYNE: I do not think that is an accurate read of my response to the question, which I have taken on notice. What I would refer Mr Braddock to are the significant election commitments that we have to footpath maintenance, and those do include filling in missing sections. But I will familiarise myself with the question taken on notice and, if I need to correct the record, of course I will.

MS CLAY: Has the workforce of the path repair crew increased to 10 in the first quarter of 2025 to facilitate better paths?

MS CHEYNE: I thank Ms Clay for the question. Certainly, that recruitment has been underway. I believe it was delayed for a reason that is not quite coming to me. As to whether that crew has expanded to 10 in the first quarter of 2025, I will take that on notice.

Waste—collection

MR WERNER-GIBBINGS: My question is also to the Minister for City Services. Minister, can you please update the Assembly on the transition of the household waste collection contract?

MS CHEYNE: I thank Mr Werner-Gibbings for the question. A procurement process was undertaken in 2023 and the new contract for our household waste collections was awarded to J.J. Richards & Sons. While preparing to cease service in the territory, Veolia continued to provide a largely stable service. Aside from a single afternoon of disruption due to staffing issues and another which was necessitated by the death of a colleague and the workforce's attendance at a funeral, there were no significant disruptions to service. Those issues that were experienced in those two days were rectified in the following days, as was required under Veolia's contract.

The new contract with J.J.'s commenced on 28 April. The first week of service is widely recognised as challenging for a new provider anywhere in the world, and yet I would suspect that most people are not aware that there has been a transition. It has been extraordinarily smooth. Only one per cent of collections were reported as a missed collection, and even then, some were genuine reports of missed services because there were new routes undertaken, for example, but others were wrongly reported missed collections, certainly with good intention, but it was simply due to collections occurring at a different time of day. TCCS continues to work closely with J.J.'s to minimise any

disruption and to ensure the contracted service is delivered at a high standard. I particularly thank the fantastic drivers from Veolia, and now, the workforce has transitioned to J.J.'s. They are under an EBA. They really do a thankless job. It does remind me a little bit of wicket keeping; you do not notice they are there until they drop the ball. Our garbo's never drop the ball, accidentally, and what they have done to support us is a credit—(*Time expired.*)

MR WERNER-GIBBINGS: Minister, what changes will the community see and how will it impact the service?

MS CHEYNE: I thank Mr Werner-Gibbings for the supplementary. The most obvious difference is the trucks. The contract included a new fleet of trucks on the road, including 30 general waste, 12 recycling and 11 green waste or FOGO collection vehicles. A new electric garbage truck is also expected to come into service in the territory. This fleet of trucks is more agile and technologically advanced. They can manage some of the tougher tasks and this has resulted in some changed service conditions, with the most significant being that in Charnwood.

Depending on where you live in Charnwood, prior to this new contract, your rubbish would have been collected on one of four different days. I am happy to update the Assembly that the new fleet of trucks allows the collection in Charnwood for household bins to occur on Wednesdays alone. It is a more efficient service that achieves better outcomes for our community.

To finish my response to the first question, I would encourage members to have a look at what is happening in Birmingham if they need a reminder of just how vital a garbage and household waste collection service is. I think the fact that this has been such a smooth transition and that our workforce provides such a high standard of service cannot be overstated. We are very lucky to have such a dedicated workforce and are very thankful to Veolia, J.J.'s and City Services for managing such a smooth transition.

MS TOUGH: Minister, what should members of the community do if their bins have not been collected?

MS CHEYNE: I thank Ms Tough for the supplementary. In the first instance, I would encourage Canberrans to wait, in order to be sure that their collection is not simply occurring at a different time that day. The new provider does have different routes which may alter the time that a household's bins are collected on any given day. However, if a bin has been missed, customers can call J.J.'s at 6270 5070 within 24 hours and leave the bin on the curb. It will be collected. ACT No Waste and the team that is responsible for the enhancements to Fix My Street have also worked with J.J.'s to set up a simple missed bin collection request form on the TCCS website and that interfaces directly with J.J.'s. So if you submit through that form, J.J.'s will be able to receive that missed bin collection and to respond accordingly. J.J.'s and City Services will continue to focus on minimising service disruptions and ensuring the smooth transition across the ACT.

Roads—Woden

MR COCKS: My question is to either the Minister for Transport or the Minister for

City and Government Services, depending on who is more appropriate. Minister, despite repeated campaigns over the last term to upgrade intersections and transport infrastructure along Yamba Drive and Hindmarsh Drive, the then minister for transport and city services advised that there was no plan to address these issues, because they were not in the top 100 most dangerous intersections. It has now been revealed that the intersection of Hindmarsh Drive and Yamba Drive is the second most dangerous in the ACT.

Minister, what analysis have you undertaken to understand the relationship between the problems at this intersection and the surrounding roads and intersections?

MS CHEYNE: I will take this question, but I will take the substance of it on notice. I need to doublecheck that ‘second most’ versus ‘top 100’ et cetera. There are different applications of how the most dangerous intersections are determined, and that might provide some further context to the answer. But I will take the substance on notice.

MR COCKS: Minister, will you agree to fix the traffic and safety problems in this area, including the surrounding intersections and the interface with pedestrians and buses accessing the hospital?

MS CHEYNE: Without the information available to me at this moment, I cannot agree to anything. But I will seek to provide as fulsome a response as I can to Mr Cocks.

MR HANSON: Minister, what is your understanding of the relationship between increased congestion, driver frustration and traffic accidents?

MS CHEYNE: Mr Speaker, that is an odd question. Here we are again! What I would say is that a whole lot of different factors are interrelated when it comes to accidents and congestion. We have been investing in traffic monitoring. There is a Traffic Management Centre—

Members interjecting—

MR SPEAKER: Mr Hanson, do you want to hear the answer to the question?

Mr Hanson: Once she started by saying it was odd, I lost hope!

MS CHEYNE: Thank you, Mr Speaker. We do have a Traffic Management Centre. It is monitoring the flow of traffic throughout the city. There are, I think, hundreds of CCTV cameras at major intersections—and smaller intersections as well—across the city, so that our teams who program the signals can respond to what they are seeing.

Of course, the factors that Mr Hanson reflected on yesterday can be interrelated, but plenty of other factors can as well, such as the condition of the road. It can be the weather. It can be a person’s personal circumstances. So, yes, there is a relationship between them, but that is not the only part of the story.

Roads—Coppins Crossing Road

MR COCKS: My question is to the Minister for City and Government Services.

Minister, residents in Molonglo Valley are now facing two-hour commutes, overcrowded buses and growing traffic jams. The transport network is being overwhelmed by rapid population growth and delayed infrastructure, particularly the long-overdue Coppins Crossing bridge. These issues are now spilling over into surrounding suburbs and roads. Minister, did the government undertake any traffic modelling to understand the impact of the bridge project on traffic congestion?

MS CHEYNE: Yes, I think that is very clear by the fact that we gave very advanced notice about the closure of the bridge area for these three weeks. I would note that it is only for the installation of four girders on the side of the river where they have now been installed. The rest of the girders are going to be installed in the weeks following this weekend. It will take longer, but Coppins Crossing will be open.

We did know that this would be seriously disruptive. We let people know as soon as possible, as soon as we had a good idea about the delivery date of the girders and of the arrival of Australia's second-largest crane and the build for that. Once we were certain on that, we gave as much notice as possible to advise people that they would need to be taking a different route.

MR COCKS: Minister, what options did the government identify to alleviate or deal with traffic congestion during the bridge construction, other than pushing the problem back onto residents with the generic message "Rethink your routine"?

MS CHEYNE: I think there are limited options for the government to provide when Coppins Crossing is the only way through that particular area and over the Molonglo River bridge. We were not able to magically have helicopters or things like. We were able to give some clear direction about the detours to take and that this would have an impact. We were able to stress what buses were available, and the government took on the feedback about the school routes, in particular, and responded accordingly with some extra services.

MR HANSON: Minister, as someone who spent a long time on Streeton Drive and the Cotter Road this morning, when will Canberra's traffic problems be fixed, given the government has been promising a solution to traffic congestion since 2016?

MS CHEYNE: Mr Speaker, light rail is a big part of that. As you heard, it is a congestion-buster and it does encourage people to take a different mode of transport.

Mr Hanson: Is it coming to Molonglo?

MS CHEYNE: Yes, it is coming to Woden, Mr Hanson. In addition, we are investing in major upgrade projects right across the city—for example, the Monaro Highway. You would understand, particularly, Mr Speaker, the impact of those lights there in ensuring that, while we have to do a particular bit of effort on that road with Dogtrap Creek, all efforts have been—

Mr Hanson: A point of order, Mr Speaker. The question was about when this will be fixed. I am after a date or a timeline. The minister is saying that it will be a tram that is going to fix it all. When will that be coming out to Molonglo?

MR SPEAKER: If it is possible to be more relevant to the question, that would be good.

MS CHEYNE: He just asked another one. Traffic movements and modelling change all the time with population. We have been projecting population. Some of that has been notoriously difficult, because we have not had the most accurate data from the ABS. When the population projections do come through, what we have been relying on, the latest data that has been available to us, has not been accurate, and our city has been growing much faster. That does make it very difficult to plan. But we are investing in our roads, and we are doing so in partnership with the commonwealth. There are always going to be more areas that we can invest in and make changes to as we acknowledge how the community is growing, where they are living and how they are travelling. To ask for a particular date for transport to be solved is just silly.

Mr Barr: Further questions can be placed on the notice paper.