



Katy Gallagher MLA

CHIEF MINISTER

MINISTER FOR HEALTH

MINISTER FOR INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

MEMBER FOR MOLONGLO

MEDIA RELEASE

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Report shows that nurse-led walk in centre, safe, high quality and very popular

Chief Minister and Minister for Health Katy Gallagher MLA has today released the independent evaluation of the ACT's nurse led Walk-in Centre (WIC). The report shows that the WIC has provided a safe and effective service that is already highly valued and widely embraced by the ACT community. Importantly, the report identifies the strengths of the service but also the areas for continued development.

The WIC located at Canberra Hospital is the first public nurse led WIC in Australia and opened its doors in May 2010 and assessed 14,688 patients during the reporting period and a total of 8,463 treated.

“One of significant finding of the report is the very high levels of consumer satisfaction with the patient survey showing that 84% of patients would definitely recommend the Walk-in Centre to family and friends, with 82% stating that they would definitely use the Walk-in Centre again.

“Other positive findings in the report include the high utilisation of the service, showing that 63% of those presenting were able to be treated at the WIC; that the service has improved access to primary care services in the ACT; that staff reported they were able to deliver high quality care; and that overall the service is having positive impacts for consumers and practitioners across the Territory,” the Chief Minister said.

Support for the WIC continues to grow since the report was finalised, with the numbers of clients presenting to the service continuing to increase overall to 18,476 patients in total. Over the past 3 months the WIC is seeing approximately 1,333 patients per month and redirection rates are decreasing with 77% of total presentations being able to be treated at the WIC.

“These figures indicate that there is growing community acceptance and understanding about how the WIC works and who should use the service.

“As with any new health service, the report has identified areas for potential improvement. This is an important part of the report as it sets out the areas where we need to focus our efforts to continue to develop and improve this service for both consumers and staff,” the Chief Minister said.

The areas for continued discussion and improvement include the model of care, software support, additions to create a multidisciplinary team, location of the WIC, Emergency Department/WIC workloads and relationships, referrals to and from the WIC, scope of practise for advanced practise

nurses and nurse practitioners, access to after-hours radiology and staff training and management opportunities.

“The original aims of the WIC were to fulfil an unmet health care need in the community, better meet projected demand for health services, and develop innovative strategies to recruit and retain a professional multidisciplinary workforce and to relieve pressure on the public hospital system.

“My own view after reading the report has been that the WIC has met three of these aims very well with the only aim in question, being that of relieving pressure on the public hospital system, and in particular the emergency department at the Canberra Hospital.

“The report concluded that it is likely that the overall impact of the WIC is a net increase in emergency department activity. This is suggested to be likely due to the WIC resulting in people going to the Canberra Hospital campus when they may not have otherwise done so. The Government will seek feedback as to whether an alternative location for the Walk-in Centre is appropriate as this has been an area of contention in the past.

“I welcome the independent evaluation of the nurse-led WIC report I thank the review team for their work, the consumers who helped us understand their views by completing the survey, the staff at the WIC for the care they have provided ensuring that the service is safe and highly regarded and to the health stakeholders who have worked with us over the past two years. I look forward to working with all of them to develop this service and ensure it continues to meet the needs of the community,” the Chief Minister said.

The Government will now engage in a six week public consultation period on the report and feedback can be provided via email to: DCECorporate@act.gov.au

For more information please visit www.health.act.gov.au/communityconsultation

A copy of the evaluation report and an interim response to the report is attached.

Statement Ends

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