

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Question On Notice

Tuesday, 11 October 2016

4422. Hon Robin Chappie to the Parliamentary Secretary representing the Minister for Mental Health

I refer to the Education and Health Standing Committee Report No 5, 'The impact of FIFO work practices on mental health' and Recommendations 4, 19, 21 and 26, and ask:

- (a) has the Minister addressed and actioned the recommendations outlined above;
- (b) if no to (a), why not;
- (c) will the Minister list by recommendation number the action that has been undertaken in respect of each recommendation;
- (d) if no to (c), why not;
- (e) will the Minister provide the date of the action that has been undertaken in respect of each recommendation;
- (f) if no to (e), why not; and
- (g) if any of the recommendations have not been undertaken, will the Minister outline which recommendations have not been actioned, and the reason why?

Answer

- (a) Currently in progress
- (b) N/A
- (c) Yes

Recommendation 4

The Education and Health Standing Committee recommends that the Minister for Mental Health funds the Mental Health Commission (MHC) to commission independent research into the mental health impacts of fly-in, fly-out (FIFO) work arrangements on workers and their families. Such research should involve:

- A range of different sites across the State, with different mining systems (i.e. underground, open cut, etc.);
- Both construction and production workers;
- A representative sample of workers in terms of occupational role (i.e. not biased towards professionals);
- Workers on a range of roster compressions;
- A large (over 1,000) sample size;

- Many different companies, including contractors;
- Data gathering to include the impact on families; and
- A longitudinal focus.

Recommendation 19

That the former Drug and Alcohol Office (DAO) initiates an inquiry into possible harmful drinking habits and alcohol consumption of FIFO workers, and the impact on their mental health.

Recommendation 21

That the MHC, in conjunction with industry and non-government organisations, develops a training program for managers and supervisors in the resources industry to address mental health issues, including suicide prevention and managing mental health problems amongst colleagues and workers.

Progress against Recommendation 21

- In October 2015, the MHC entered into an agreement to develop the Western Australia Workplace Mental Health Standards: Preventing Suicide.
- In October 2015, the MHC provided \$100,000 to MATES In Construction Standby Response Program.
- In May 2016, the MHC partnered with This Working Life to facilitate forums on trauma risk management and creating mental health resilience in the workplace.

Recommendation 26

That the MHC (former DAO) conducts further research into the use of illicit drugs by FIFO workers, particularly the use of short-acting illicit and new synthetic substances, and the impact on mental health.

Progress against recommendations 4, 19 and 26

- The MHC is currently considering recommendations 4, 19 and 26 within one piece of research.
- The MHC completed an initial literature review of existing research in the first quarter of 2016. This focused on the latest available research and large scale studies into the mental health impacts of FIFO work arrangements, possible harmful drinking habits and alcohol consumption of FIFO workers and illicit drugs by FIFO workers.
- The MHC is a member of the FIFO Mental Health Research Steering Committee, established in early 2016. Chaired by LifeLine WA, the Research Steering Committee has been established to progress the aforementioned recommendations and includes both employer and employee representatives as well as the mental health and alcohol and other drug peak bodies.
- The Research Steering Committee has developed and is currently considering a draft research specification based on the recommendations.

- (d) N/A
- (e) Yes. Dates of action are provided in response to question (c).
- (f) N/A
- (g) N/A

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MINISTER FOR MENTAL HEALTH

**LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
Question On Notice**

Tuesday, 11 October 2016

4423. Hon Robln Chapple to the Attorney General

I refer to the Education and Health Standing Committee Report No 5, 'The impact of FIFO work practices on mental health' and Recommendation 3, and ask:

- (a) has the Attorney General provide funding to the Coroner's Court of Western Australia to develop and implement a searchable database for recording and monitoring trends in reportable deaths in Western Australia;
- (b) if no to (a), why not;
- (c) if there is a plan to develop a searchable database, by what date will it be implemented; and
- (d) if yes to (a), how much funding was provided, and by what date was the project completed?

Answer

- (a) Yes.
- (b) Not applicable.
- (c) June 2018.
- (d) The total cost of this project will be confirmed upon completion of the initiation phase of the project in mid-2017.

