

CONSTITUENT QUESTION

House of Assembly

ASKED BY: Helen Burnet MP

ANSWERED BY: Hon Bridget Archer MP
Minister for Health, Mental Health and Wellbeing

QUESTION:

My question is from clinicians and staff who are HACSU members of Clare House. Minister, for over 40 years, the Child Youth Mental Health Services have provided children and young people with a therapeutic mental health environment filled with natural light, garden space and a welcoming atmosphere at Clare House - something money can't buy. Why would Clare House be sold and relocated to an office building in the CBD with limited clinical spaces, no dedicated service parking, creating a functional and physical barrier for accessing the service? What else has been given priority over young people's mental health?

ANSWER:

1. As part of the Child and Youth Mental Health Service review, it was identified that Clare House is not fit-for-purpose for the delivery of a modern health service, including its size, accessibility, and consumer and staff safety.
2. Clare House is an ageing facility that does not meet contemporary health facility guidelines.

3. Meeting these standards on this site – including for disability and wheelchair access – would require extensive works.
4. I am advised that the Department of Health has consulted extensively with staff and other key stakeholders on the proposal to move community Child and Youth Mental Health Services currently delivered at Clare House to a new purpose designed facility at Watchorn Street in the Hobart CBD, supported by new community-based service locations.
5. Consultation has been underway since January, with feedback gathered through eight group sessions, tours of the Watchorn Street site, and written submissions.
6. In line with person centred and evidence-based mental health care, the Child and Youth Mental Health Service model provides time-limited, needs-based and goal-directed care that is appointment-based.
7. Children, young people and their families are not required to be in a clinical setting for an extended period.
8. Child and Youth Mental Health Service care planning takes into the account the needs and preferences of the child or young person and includes options for outreach into other community service settings close to home.
9. The recently refurbished Watchorn Street site will enhance clinical service delivery, strengthen staff and consumer safety through contemporary design and technology, and significantly improve disability access.
10. I am also advised there is increased clinical space at Watchorn Street, from five spaces at Clare House to seven at Watchorn Street, and parking is available onsite and can be made available to consumers where appropriate.

Bridget Archer

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Minister for Health, Mental Health and Wellbeing

Date: 18/5/26