



Education and Health Standing Committee
Annual Report 2015-16

Report No. 9
September 2016

Legislative Assembly
Parliament of Western Australia

Committee Members

Chair	Dr G.G. Jacobs, MLA Member for Eyre
Deputy Chair	Ms R. Saffioti, MLA Member for West Swan
Members	Ms J.M. Freeman, MLA Member for Mirrabooka
	Hon. R.F. Johnson, MLA Member for Hillarys
	Mr M.J. Cowper, MLA Member for Murray Wellington

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Education and Health Standing Committee

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2015–2016

Report No. 9

Presented by

Dr G.G. Jacobs, MLA

Laid on the Table of the Legislative Assembly on 15 September 2016

Chairman's Foreword

It is a pleasure to present the annual report of the Education and Health Standing Committee to the Assembly to share with you the meaningful work we have done throughout the 2015–2016 financial year. I believe that the role of the Parliamentary Committee is to provide an objective assessment of matters before, and of interest to, Parliament to improve the lives of the people of Western Australia and ensure value for money for the taxpayer.

This year, the Committee concluded its inquiry into the transition and operation of services at Fiona Stanley Hospital. We saw how important it is to get the transition to a new hospital right, complete with records and staff, to reduce risk to patients' health. We saw how important it is to have a comprehensive discharge communication network for ongoing care.

The Committee is also investigating the Department of Health's management of its Centralised Computing Services Contract. We were astounded by the Auditor General's report on this contract, in particular how the contract was mismanaged by the Department of Health and the significant overspend which has resulted.

The Committee has also commenced two new inquiries, one to understand the Independent Public Schools initiative, and the second into Aboriginal Youth Suicide in recognition of the motion moved by the Member for Kimberley to address this tragic epidemic.

The Committee explored the positive aspects of the Independent Public Schools initiative, and the need to balance devolution of responsibility with providing appropriate levels of support to school principals and staff, and standardised reviews of school performance. Based on evidence received, consistent improvements in student outcomes are not a demonstrable result of this initiative and, indeed, the Department of Education acknowledges that improved student outcomes are not a primary objective of the reform.

The Committee continues to work on its inquiry to address the tragic phenomenon of young Aboriginal people surrendering their own lives in Western Australia. We will report on this important matter to you in late 2016.

I thank the hard working members and executive staff for working to make a difference.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'G.G. Jacobs', with several long, sweeping horizontal strokes extending to the right.

DR G.G. JACOBS, MLA
CHAIRMAN

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Chapter 1

Committee Activities

Introduction

This report covers the work undertaken by the Education and Health Standing Committee of the 39th Parliament during the financial year 2015–2016. During the period between 1 July 2015 and 30 June 2016, the Committee:

- held 27 deliberative meetings;
- took evidence from 80 witnesses at 28 hearings;
- conducted three inquiries and tabled two reports; and
- travelled to Alice Springs, Rotorua, New Zealand and throughout the Kimberley region of Western Australia as part of its inquiry into Aboriginal Youth Suicide.

Table 1.1: Summary of activities for the Education and Health Standing Committee, 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2016

Description	Activities
Deliberative meetings	27
Formal evidence hearings	28
Witnesses appearing	80
Reports tabled	2
Report findings tabled	20
Report recommendations tabled	10

Fiona Stanley Hospital Inquiry

On 26 November 2015, the Committee tabled its report *Managing the transition?: The report of the inquiry into the transition and operation of services at Fiona Stanley Hospital* (FSH). This is the report of the Committee’s second inquiry related to FSH, following on from its April 2014 report *More than Bricks and Mortar: The report of the inquiry into the organisational response within the Department of Health to the challenges associated with commissioning the Fiona Stanley Hospital*.

The Committee resolved to conduct this inquiry, commencing on 22 April 2015, in response to media reporting of a number of incidents at FSH. The Committee sought to ascertain whether any serious systemic failures existed at the new hospital, and to report on the practical operation of the services contract with Serco Asia Pacific (Serco).

During the course of the reporting period, 17 submissions were received, and one closed hearing and six public hearings were held. Submissions were primarily received

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from the Department of Health and organisations representing the interests of hospital staff.

The report made 20 findings and 10 recommendations. The report highlights concerns with the transition management, in particular the transferring of patient records and initial problems for information technology and information management systems. However, overall, the Committee was satisfied that action has been taken, and continues to be taken, to rectify these issues, resulting in satisfactory operations at the hospital.

The report also inquired into the outsourcing of non-clinical services to Serco as facility manager, a decision which has been subject to ongoing scrutiny since it was made in 2011. The Committee wrote to the Auditor General to request that his office undertake a performance audit of Serco's self-reporting and the Department of Health's assurance process around that reporting. In May 2016, the Auditor General advised the Committee that he was commencing a preliminary audit into the non-clinical services at FSH. The report on this preliminary audit is due to be released in the last quarter of 2016.

The Government provided satisfactory responses to nine of the 10 recommendations made by the Committee in the report. A response to Recommendation 9 will be provided once negotiations regarding Serco's contract variation proposal have concluded.

Independent Public Schools Inquiry

The Independent Public Schools (IPS) initiative commenced in 2010 as one of the most significant reforms in the history of Western Australia's public education system. As it continues to be rolled out to more and more schools – there are currently over 445 IP Schools accommodating approximately 70 per cent of teacher and student populations – the IPS initiative has a huge impact on school staff, schools and communities.

The Committee resolved to conduct an inquiry into the initiative in response to concerns raised by parents and school staff about how the IPS initiative impacted students, particularly those with additional needs. Commencing on 25 February 2016, the Committee received 32 submissions, including supplementary submissions, and conducted eight hearings over the course of the inquiry. Submissions were received from a wide range of interested parties, including state government agencies, board members, school staff and their representative organisations, and parents.

During the submissions period, concerns were raised by school staff, board members and parents about the potential for negative repercussions if they were to provide candid comments to the Committee about the IPS initiative. The Committee agreed to accept closed evidence from those who held concerns about the negative effect of

disclosure. The Committee is also aware that a number of people chose not to provide submissions directly to the inquiry, instead contacting their representative organisation which then provided a submission to the inquiry on behalf of all its members.

The Committee tabled its report *IPS Report Card: The Report of the Inquiry into the Independent Public Schools initiative* on 15 August 2016.

Aboriginal Youth Suicide Inquiry

In March 2016, a 10 year old girl in the remote Aboriginal community of Looma took her own life. This tragic event prompted the Member for Kimberley, Ms Josie Farrer MLA, to move a motion in the Legislative Assembly that a parliamentary inquiry be undertaken ‘to determine what more can be done to halt the worrying number of youth suicides amongst Aboriginal youth in Western Australia, particularly in remote communities, and to determine what resources have been set aside to tackle this crucial issue facing our state.’

In recognising this motion, the Committee resolved to inquire into youth suicide in remote Aboriginal communities, with a particular focus on examining the status of previous inquiry recommendations related to Aboriginal youth suicide in remote areas, allocation of resources to suicide prevention strategies and services, and gaps in strategies and services. The Member for Kimberley was co-opted onto the Committee for the duration of the inquiry.

Commencing on 22 March 2016, the Committee received 31 submissions and conducted 11 public hearings and one closed hearing during the 2015–16 year. Submissions were received from members of Aboriginal communities and advocacy organisations, State and Federal Government agencies, suicide prevention organisations and research organisations.

In May 2016, the Committee attended the first ever Aboriginal suicide prevention conference in Alice Springs. This conference was organised by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention Evaluation Project, a federally funded project to evaluate the effectiveness of existing suicide prevention services and programs.

The Committee also attended the first World Indigenous Suicide Prevention Conference held in Rotorua, New Zealand in June 2016. The Committee continued its inquiry by visiting the Kimberley, particularly Broome, Derby and Kununurra. During the visit, the Committee held hearings with representatives of State Government agencies, Aboriginal organisations and suicide prevention services. It also visited and spoke with residents of remote Aboriginal communities.

The Committee is due to table its report of the inquiry in late 2016.

The Department of Health's Procurement and Management of its Centralised Computing Services Contract

In February 2016, the Committee became aware of the Auditor General's *Report into the Department of Health's Procurement and Management of its Centralised Computing Services Contract*. This report highlighted the significant cost blow out of a large Department of Health contract, partly due to the approval of contract variations by unauthorised employees, poor contract and financial management and significant concerns regarding internal record keeping.

In March 2016, the Committee held hearings with the Department of Health and the Office of the Auditor General to further investigate the Auditor General's findings and assure itself that the Department of Health was taking all necessary steps to rectify the numerous failures identified in the Auditor General's report.

In June 2016, the Auditor General released a supplementary report after further investigations uncovered additional information not provided to the Auditor General during the course of his initial audit.

The Committee will report on its investigations in the second half of 2016.

Other Matters

In March 2016, the Committee was pleased to meet with the Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee (HCDSDFVP Committee) of the Queensland Parliament. The HCDSDFVP Committee was visiting Perth to gather information in relation to several of its inquiries, and sought a meeting with the Committee to discuss these inquiries.

The Committee has also continued to monitor the State Government and industry actions in implementing the recommendations made by the Committee in its report of *The impact of FIFO work practices on mental health: Final Report*.

Public Hearings

Pursuant to Legislative Assembly Standing Order No. 264, the Committee has the power to send for persons, papers and records. During the period 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2016, the Committee conducted 26 public hearings, taking evidence from 74 witnesses to assist with its investigations.

Table 1.2: Public hearings of the Education and Health Standing Committee, 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2016

Date	Name	Position	Organisation
19 August 2015	Dr I Jenkins	Chair, Inter-hospital Liaison Committee	Australian Medical Association
	Ms M Kuhne	Director, Industrial Relations/Legal	
19 August 2015	Mr M Olson	State Secretary	Australian Nursing Federation
23 September 2015	Mr D Hill	Secretary	Health Services Union of Western Australia
	Ms M Wagner	Senior Organiser	
	Mr R Barlow	Lead Organiser	
14 October 2015	Hon Dr K Hames MLA	Minister for Health	Department of Health
	Dr D Russell-Weisz	Director General	
	Dr R Lawrence	Acting Chief Executive, South Metropolitan Health Service	
	Mr L Mclvor	Executive Director, Contract Management, South Metropolitan Health Service	
	Dr H Seymour	Medical Co-Director, Fiona Stanley Hospital	
	Mr G Nunis	Government Chief Information Officer	
19 October 2015	Dr D Russell-Weisz	Director General	Department of Health
	Dr R Lawrence	Acting Chief Executive, South Metropolitan Health Service	
	Mr L Mclvor	Executive Director, Contract Management, South Metropolitan Health Service	
	Dr H Seymour	Medical Co-Director, Fiona Stanley Hospital	
	Professor B Stokes	Former Acting Director General	
21 October 2015	Mr M Irwin	Chief Executive Officer	Serco Asia Pacific
	Mr J Boyle	Transition Project Director at Fiona Stanley Hospital	
	Mr B Cotter	Contract Director for Serco at Fiona Stanley Hospital	
	Mr A Wheble	Operations Director at Fiona Stanley Hospital	

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Date	Name	Position	Organisation
21 March 2016	Mr C Murphy	Auditor General	Office of the Auditor General
	Ms S Labuschagne	Assistant Auditor General Information Systems and Performance Audit	
23 March 2016	Dr D Russell-Weisz	Director General	Department of Health
	Ms R Brown	Deputy Director General	
16 May 2016	Mr S Breen	President	Western Australian Primary Principals' Association
16 May 2016	Ms K Catto	President	Western Australian Council of State School Organisations
16 May 2016	Ms P Byrne	President	State School Teachers' Union of Western Australia
	Mr K Doherty	Organiser	
	Mr K Dullard	School Leaders' Organiser	
	Mr D Lee	School Leaders' Project Consultant	
16 May 2016	Mrs J Gee	President	Western Australian Secondary School Executives Association
	Mrs K Shearing	Associate Principal, Churchlands Senior High School	Department of Education
	Mrs M Griffiths	Principal, Armadale Senior High School	
	Mr M Gillett	Principal	
	Mr A Kassab	Teacher, School of Special Educational Needs: Disability	
16 May 2016	Mr R Strickland	Director General	Department of Education Services
	Dr P Wood	Assistant Director	
	Mr T Werner	Director, Higher Education and Legislative Review	
18 May 2016	Ms S O'Neill	Director General	Department of Education
	Mr L Hale	Executive Director, Statewide Services	
	Mr C Gillam	Executive Director, Workforce	
	Mr D Price	Director, School Improvement and Support Unit	
	Mr P Titmanis	Executive Director, Innovation, Performance and Research	
7 June 2016	Mr R McPhee	Deputy Chief Executive Officer	Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Services

Date	Name	Position	Organisation
	Mrs R Washington	Manager, Headspace Broome	
7 June 2016	Mr W Barker	KALACC Festival and Cultural Events Coordinator	Kimberley Aboriginal Legal and Cultural Centre
	Mr S Herring	Men's Coordinator	Yiriman Project
7 June 2016	Ms R Smith	Regional Director, Western Australian Country Health Services – Kimberley	Department of Health
	Mr R Goodie	Regional Manager, Kimberley Mental Health and Drug Service	
	Dr M Chapman	Clinical Director, Kimberley Mental Health and Drug Service	
	Ms H Diver	Coordinator, Kimberley Community Alcohol and Drug Services	
	Ms S Luketina	Team Leader, Kimberley Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service	
7 June 2016	Mr D Wirken	Chief Executive Officer	Aarnja Ltd
7 June 2016	Mr P Mitchell	Chief Executive Officer	Men's Outreach Service
	Ms V Poelina	Program Manager	Alive and Kicking Goals!
	Miss T Skeen	Women's Reference Group Member	
	Ms A Howard	Peer Educator	
	Mr E McKenzie	Peer Educator	
10 June 2016	Mr T Howe	Kununurra Mental Health Team Leader, Kimberley Mental Health and Drug Service	
	Mrs C Durrans	East Coordinator, Kimberley Community Alcohol and Drug Service	
10 June 2016	Dr N Jeffery-Dawes	Mental Health Professional	Boab Health Services
	Mr J Hadjis	Deputy Chief Executive Officer	
10 June 2016	Ms K Ambler	Standby Coordinator East Kimberley	Anglicare/United Synergies StandBy
20 June 2016	Professor P Dudgeon	Project Director	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention Evaluation Project
	Ms A Cox	National Consultant	
	Mr G Georgatos	Community Consultant and Critical Response Advocate	

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Date	Name	Position	Organisation
20 June 2016	Mr G Georgatos	Independent Researcher	
27 June 2016	Ms C Smith	Secretary	United Voice
	Mrs P Clarke	Research Officer	
	Mrs D Baker	Head Cleaner	Warwick Senior High School
	Mrs T Sumner	Education Assistant	Department of Education
	Mrs N Treloar	Education Assistant	
27 June 2016	Dr S Fitzgerald	Senior Lecturer	Curtin University

Closed Hearings

In support of the Inquiries into the transition and operation of services at Fiona Stanley Hospital and into Aboriginal Youth Suicide, the Committee held a total of two closed hearings with six witnesses.

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The Education and Health Standing Committee is without its own formal budget, and is consequentially funded from the budget of the Legislative Assembly. Approval for major expenditure is required on a case-by-case basis and is entirely at the discretion of the Speaker.

Committee Financial Statement

The Committee's expenditure for the financial year 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2016 (in accordance with Standing Order 276) is provided below (table 2.1).

Table 2.1: Expenditure Items, 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2016

Expenditure Item	\$
Travel	61,283
Couriers/Postage	1,158
Printing	3,368
Advertising	3,991
Staff amenities	1,190
Total	70,990

Notes:

- *All figures rounded to the nearest \$100.*
- *Salaries of committee staff are not included.*
- *Costs of shared administrative expenses, including lease costs for committee accommodation, are not included.*



DR G.G. JACOBS, MLA
CHAIRMAN

Appendix One

Committee's functions and powers

The functions of the Committee are to review and report to the Assembly on:

- a) the outcomes and administration of the departments within the Committee's portfolio responsibilities;
- b) annual reports of government departments laid on the Table of the House;
- c) the adequacy of legislation and regulations within its jurisdiction; and
- d) any matters referred to it by the Assembly including a bill, motion, petition, vote or expenditure, other financial matter, report or paper.

At the commencement of each Parliament and as often thereafter as the Speaker considers necessary, the Speaker will determine and table a schedule showing the portfolio responsibilities for each committee. Annual reports of government departments and authorities tabled in the Assembly will stand referred to the relevant committee for any inquiry the committee may make.

Whenever a committee receives or determines for itself fresh or amended terms of reference, the committee will forward them to each standing and select committee of the Assembly and Joint Committee of the Assembly and Council. The Speaker will announce them to the Assembly at the next opportunity and arrange for them to be placed on the notice boards of the Assembly.