

## Hansard

14-2-2008

### SHINE SA

The **Hon. A.L. EVANS** (14:49): I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Mental Health and Substance Abuse a question about SHine SA and the AIDS Council of South Australia.

Leave granted.

The **Hon. A.L. EVANS**: I note that in recent months all references to SHine SA, which is tasked by the government with sexual education in many of our schools, have been removed from the AIDS Council of SA website. SHine SA, conversely, has now set up its own website, which also no longer mentions the AIDS Council, despite their previous strong links.

The AIDS Council, despite its noble name and charter, is an organisation that has recently appeared to operate in a bubble of total unaccountability. In recent times, numerous allegations have been made about the misuse of taxpayers' funds in relation to this organisation. Despite these claims and concerns, the Auditor-General has noted that the AIDS Council's funding was increased by \$1.254 million in 2006-07. Further, the same report indicates that SHine SA received an increase in funding of \$3.9 million to \$6.45 million—a 60 per cent increase in funding in one financial year, whilst all other NGOs, on average, suffered a 2.5 per cent cut in funding. This increase places the AIDS Council and SHine SA (with at least \$7.7 million combined) firmly as second only to the Royal District Nursing Services of SA Incorporated (\$9.5 million) as the largest NGO recipients and funding from the entire health department.

The primary aim of the SHine SA program is harm minimisation (despite the success of zero tolerance strategies in other countries such as Sweden) as it aims to reduce the spread of sexually transmitted diseases. On that front, let me add that the Sexually Transmitted Disease Service of the Royal Adelaide Hospital shows that, in 2003, when the SHine SA program was first trialled in some schools, 441 teenagers reported as having chlamydia. In 2004, as the program expanded, the numbers rose to 581. In 2005, 588 were reported. In the most recent 2006 data, after many more schools joined the program, the numbers soared to 747. This equates to an almost 70 per cent increase as the program rolled out. My questions are:

1. When and where was SHine SA directed or advised to disassociate itself from the AIDS Council of SA?

2. Does SHine SA remain the preferred supplier of sexual education material to South Australian schools, despite a total failure to meet its objective in decreasing chlamydia infection rates among teenagers?

3. Why has the budget for SHine SA increased by almost 70 per cent, despite its total failure to meet its objectives in decreasing chlamydia infection rates among teenagers?

The **Hon. G.E. GAGO** (Minister for Environment and Conservation, Minister for Mental Health and Substance Abuse, Minister Assisting the Minister for Health) (14:53): I thank the honourable member for his questions. I will need to refer most of his questions to the Minister for Health in another place and bring back a response because they relate to the health portfolio. To the best of my knowledge, SHine SA is funded through health and it is a health program. In terms of the question about its disassociation from the AIDS Council, again I will have to take that question on notice and bring back a response. I am not sure when that occurred.

The Hon. S.G. Wade interjecting:

The **Hon. G.E. GAGO**: I do not have detailed knowledge about matters belonging to another portfolio. It is pretty straightforward really. It is important to say that the AIDS Council of South Australia is a body that receives funding from a number of different sources and provides incredibly valuable services, particularly in respect of my portfolio responsibilities. One of the areas for which I am responsible is the clean needle program. That is a vitally important program to reduce the spread of blood-borne diseases. The cost of that not only in monetary terms but also in social terms is enormous. The council does an extremely good job in managing that program and providing those incredibly important services.

The SAVIVE part of it runs South Australia's only primary clean needle program site, located at the AIDS Council's head office in Norwood. The program provides injecting drug users with referrals to drug treatment and other health and welfare services, information and education on blood-borne virus prevention, and a range of support and advocacy services. The program is an important point of contact for what we know to be a highly marginalised population of injecting drug users, many of whom have never, or rarely, come into contact with health or other social services. This work is funded by the state government and, as I said, provides an invaluable service that has quite significant and broad ramifications for the whole of our community.

However, going back to the funding question, the total grant funding for the clean needle program, for instance, for 2006-07 was \$425,349. That consisted of a \$210,000 grant from the Australian government through the Council of Australian Governments' Illicit Drug Diversion Initiative supporting measures relating to needle and syringe programs (that is through DASSA), as well as \$215,349 in grant funding from the state government. So, they are fairly modest amounts.

The Department of Health, through the HIV and Hep C policy and programs, provided over \$1 million in 2006-07 for programs other than the clean needle program, and that was to manage and prevent a range of communicable diseases. So, the figures to which the honourable member was referring were, I believe, substantially those amounts funded from the Department of Health, not DASSA. As I outlined, our funding is far more modest. However, and as I have indicated, I will refer those questions to the Minister for Health and bring back a response.

## Hansard

30<sup>th</sup> October 2008

### SHINE SA AND THE AIDS COUNCIL OF SA

In reply to the **Hon. A.L. EVANS** (14 February 2008).

The **Hon. G.E. GAGO** (Minister for State/Local Government Relations, Minister for the Status of Women, Minister for Consumer Affairs, Minister for Government Enterprises, Minister Assisting the Minister for Transport, Infrastructure and Energy): The Minister for Health advises:

1. SHine SA has never been directed or advised to disassociate itself from the AIDS Council of SA and actually has had a long and professional relationship with the AIDS Council since it was established in the mid 1980s. SHine SA and the AIDS Council of SA work in collaboration to raise awareness about HIV/AIDS with the community, health and education professionals.

2.SHine SA remains the preferred supplier of sexual education material in South Australian schools. The Focus Schools program aims to improve the sexual health, safety and wellbeing of young South Australians through professional development for teachers and education programs for young people in government schools in years 8, 9 and 10.

Increased notifications of Chlamydia have resulted from prevention and education initiatives such as SHARE/Focus Schools, the annual Sexual Health Awareness Week and the Commonwealth's Chlamydia Strategy (2006) which has increased the demand for testing and clinical services. By increasing testing of Chlamydia, more infected people are diagnosed, treated and their contacts follow-up before further spread of the sexually transmitted infection occurs.

3.The increase in Health funding to SHine SA in 2006-07 was due to a capital grant contribution for the building of the Woodville GP Plus Health Care Centre.