

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Budget Estimates 2011-2012, 30/31 May 2011

Question: E11-104

OUTCOME 11: Mental Health

Topic: EPPIC IN A REMOTE COMMUNITY

Written Question on Notice

Senator Boyce asked:

Ms Harman from the Department gave evidence on May 30, that, and I quote, “we would not be able to build an EPPIC in a remote community”. Could you explain in detail why not?

Answer:

Early Psychosis Prevention and Early Intervention (EPPIC) sites require specialist supporting specialist workforce and infrastructure, including access to inpatient hospital beds and sub acute beds. Accessing this type of infrastructure, along with an appropriately skilled workforce, such as psychiatrists, and the logistics of covering a large geographical area, would present significant challenges for a service of this kind in remote communities.

As stated by the Department on 30 May 2011 (Hansard page 56) and on 3 June 2011 (Hansard page 50) the Government is planning a national network of 16 EPPICs sites around the country. The 16 sites will have links into, and opportunities to reach out and expand the knowledge of other services and create referral pathways to benefit Indigenous people.