

Senate Community Affairs Committee
ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO
Budget Estimates 2011-2012, 30 May 2011

Question: E11-536

OUTCOME 0: Whole of Portfolio

Topic: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare work on rural and remote health

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Senator Adams asked:

In relation to AIHW work on rural and remote health,

- a) Roughly how much of the total AIHW Budget for 2010–11 has been spent, on reporting health information by remoteness?
- b) What steps has the AIHW taken to ensure that all recurrent health expenditures can be analysed by remoteness?

Answer:

- a) The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) has considered carefully whether it is able to produce a meaningful estimate of the proportion of its Budget spent on reporting rural health by remoteness. It has concluded that it is not possible to produce a figure which is sufficiently robust and reliable to provide an objective measurement in the manner proposed of AIHW's endeavours in this regard.

As advised in our response to a related question (E11-257) during the Additional Estimates hearings in February 2011, most of AIHW's reports include regional analyses. While it is possible to provide details of expenditure on publications which focus primarily on reporting health information by region, it would be potentially misleading to seek to assess the level of expenditure on rural analysis in relation to those other reports where this work comprises a less significant component of the report's content.

- b) The AIHW reports on recurrent health expenditure annually at the national, state and territory levels. Analyses of recurrent health expenditure by remoteness require a high level of disaggregation and detail and are not routinely undertaken unless additional external funding is provided.