

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Budget Estimates 2011-2012, 30/31 May 2011

Question: E11- 219

OUTCOME 11: Mental Health

Topic: MENTAL HEALTH

Written Question on Notice

Senator Fierravanti-Wells asked:

What were the terms of reference of this expert working group? (Refer page 49 Hansard 30 May).

Answer:

As at 30 May 2011, the Terms of Reference were as follows:

The Mental Health Expert Working Group (MHEWG) is being established as a time-limited working group to provide confidential, strategic and practical advice to the Australian Government to inform mental health reform directions and decisions.

The MHEWG will provide significant input to the Australian Government about how to achieve well coordinated, cost-effective and lasting reforms to mental health care across a broad range of clinical and non clinical service systems with the aim of developing a strong, sustainable system now and into the future.

Specifically, the MHEWG will:

1. inform advice to Government in relation to key priorities for mental health reform, and the development of a sustainable framework for mental health into the future;
priorities identified through consultations to date include child and youth mental health, services for people with severe illness, and reducing the impact of common mental disorders including through the use of technology, and maximizing participation for people with mental illness;
2. give specific consideration to the continuum of care and support, including clinical and non-clinical, and advise on the most appropriate mechanism/s for the coordination of that support;
3. give due consideration of geographic and demographic scope and the interface between state/territory and Commonwealth responsibility and service provision;
4. review existing Commonwealth funding allocations to ensure appropriate prioritisation for optimal mental health outcomes and service mix;and
5. propose recommendations which are realistic, conform to a finite budget, and are cognisant of the fiscally constrained environment.