

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Budget Estimates 2012-2013, 30 & 31 May and 1 June 2012

Question: E12-154

OUTCOME 1: Population Health

Topic: Substance Misuse Service Delivery Grants fund and the Non Government Organisation Treatment Grants Program

Type of Question: Hansard Page 39, 31 May 2012

Number of pages: 2

Senator: Senator Di Natale

Question:

- a) With regard to, for example, ISIS Primary Care, can you give me a sense as to which of those categories that organisation falls into? (Were you concerned that they were not delivering services satisfactorily or do you understand that there were other services available that had been funded?)
- b) Can you give me an outline of who those other organisations might be?

Answer:

- a) The service gap analysis was focused on service delivery projects. In this context, the ISIS Primary Care Non Government Organisation Treatment Grants Program (NGOTGP) project was not extended as a satisfactory level of project delivery had not been demonstrably sustained under the organisation's funding agreement with the Department of Health and Ageing.
- b) Two other services were funded in the same region to deliver services similar to those provided by ISIS Primary Care.

The focus of ISIS Primary Care's services project under the NGOTGP was to deliver counselling, consultancy and continuing care services for those with significant socioeconomic disadvantage.

Sunbury Community Health Services and Mackillop Family Services have both been funded under the NGOTGP to deliver counselling, consultancy and continuing care services. Both services are located in the western region of Melbourne in adjacent Local Government Areas.

The Sunbury Community Health Service project will have a focus on young people responding to the significant socioeconomic disadvantage which occurs through geographic isolation. Sunbury Community Health Service has also been offered funding to support alcohol and drug alcohol treatment services through the Sunbury Service Quality and Access Improvements project.

MacKillop Family Services will receive funding for a project that provides case work support to families where at least one adult member has a self-identified substance misuse issue placing children under the age of 18 years at risk.

Background Information

Isis Primary Care has received funding under the Improved Services Initiative (ISI) and Non Government Organisation Treatment Grants Program (NGOTGP) since July 2008.

NGOTGP

- The NGOTGP project reflected a unique proposal, with a focus on enhancing access to GPs for clients with AOD issues in order to improve their health outcomes.
- The project experienced a lengthy period of delay, as the organisation was unable to recruit a GP and commence project activities. After considerable discussion over 12 months, both parties (Isis and DoHA) were in mutual agreement that the project be terminated in August 2009.
- However, further consideration by VSO staff at this stage acknowledged few NGOTGP projects were located in the western region of Melbourne, and Isis was offered the opportunity to re-scope the project.
- A revised proposal was approved and the project commenced activity in February 2010.
- Funding for this project was \$201,173 GST Exclusive over three years, however was reduced to \$171,529 GST Exclusive due to the delay in project commencement. The project was extended an additional 12 months to 30 June 2012, bring the total funding over four years to \$259,879 GST Exclusive.

ISI

- The ISI project has provided a satisfactory level of service.
- Reporting provided by the organisation indicated many improvements in AOD treatment services.
- Funding for this project was \$283,131 GST Exclusive over three years. The project was extended an additional 12 months to 30 June 2012, bringing the total funding over four years to \$396,998 GST Exclusive.
- The proposal for further funding for these activities under the SMSDGF was assessed as Suitable, and a High Priority for funding by the VSO.

Funding and capacity to deliver services

- In 2011/12, Isis Primary Care received over \$1.6million for drug and alcohol treatment from the State Department of Health; \$1.4million was for Counselling, Consultancy and Continuing Care services (a similar funding- treatment model as the NGOTGP project)

Extract from Hansard - 30 May 2012

"The reasons around the extensions and why some organisations were not extended were as a result of that gap analysis that the department did in deciding whether currently funded services would be provided elsewhere. There was also a requirement that any organisation that was going to be extended had to be performing satisfactorily under the current funding arrangements."

STO original proposed responses are below. This information was used to prepare our QON input.

- a) **With regard to, for example, ISIS Primary Care, can you give me a sense as to which of those categories that organisation falls into? Were you concerned that they were not delivering services satisfactorily or do you understand that there were other services available that had been funded?**

ISIS Primary Care falls somewhat within both categories.

As highlighted above, the NGOTGP project experienced significant setbacks and did not meet agreed targets. At the time of completing the Gap Analysis, VSO staff received anecdotal information that the project was now on track and performing essentially as planned since the approval of the most recent project plan revision which occurred in May 2011. While acknowledging this, the VSO determined that the level of satisfactory project performance had not been sustained over a long period. This is not to say

that the organisation is not able to continue to satisfactorily deliver the NGOTGP project, but rather that a satisfactory level of project delivery had not been demonstrably sustained over 4 years.

In providing the Gap Analysis, it was acknowledged that the region covered by the application has substantial areas of socio-economic disadvantage and increasing refugee populations.

Two other NGOTGP services were funded in the western region of Melbourne. These organisations are in adjacent to rather than in the same LGA with funding through NGOTGP to provide Counselling, Consultancy and Continuing Care services. This is a secondary issue to the issue of performance.

As noted above the NGOTGP project encountered a number of difficulties over the past 4 years, and the project scope was re-framed on a number of occasions.

The capacity building project funded under ISI provided a satisfactory level of service. While delays in submission of reports also occurred for this project, overall it was performed satisfactorily and the proposal for further funding under the Substance Misuse Service Delivery Grants Fund was rated as Suitable - High Priority by the Assessment Panel, however only applications rated as Highly Suitable were recommended for funding.

b) Can you give me an outline of who those other organisations might be?

Sunbury Community Health Service receives funding under NGOTGP for the 'Drug and Alcohol Program' project. While the target group for the project is the whole of community, the project will have a focus on young people responding to the significant socioeconomic disadvantage with occurs though geographic isolation.

Mackillop Family Services' project receives funding under NGOTGP for the 'Substance Abuse Family Support (SAFS)' project. The project provides case work support to families where at least one adult member has a self identified substance misuse issue placing children under the age of 18 years at risk.

Both projects were rated as Highly Suitable under the NGOTGP funding round and provide Counselling, Consultancy and Continuing Care services.

SMSDGF

- Sunbury Community Health Centre is the only project funded under the SMSDGF that is in the region.
- They will receive \$646,461 under the Fund
- VSO are very close to finalising both Schedules with Sunbury CHC

The Victorian STO has also indicated that it was their understanding that the gap analysis was in relation to treatment services (NGOTGP) in the region and that there wasn't a focus on capacity building activities (the Fund). For that reason, only details on treatment services were provided.