

**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: E12-174**

**OUTCOME 11: Mental Health**

**Topic:** Burden of Disease and proportion of funding

**Type of Question:** Written Question on Notice

**Number of pages:** 1

**Senator:** Senator Wright

**Question:**

- a) The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare's 2011 Mental Health Services In Brief states that mental illness accounts for approximately 13 per cent of the total burden of disease in Australia. Is this figure consistent with the Department's calculation as to the proportion that mental illness contributes to the total burden of disease in Australia?
- b) Is the current Budget allocation of funds to mental health services and programs commensurate to the contribution mental illness makes to the total burden of disease in Australia?

**Answer:**

- a) The Department of Health and Ageing has not undertaken its own calculation of the burden of disease and injury in Australia.
- b) The burden of disease methodology helps inform health policy, however, budget allocations reflect a range of policy decisions of the Australian Government as announced in the annual Budget papers released by the Treasurer.

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) has noted that there is no necessary connection between how much is spent on a specific disease and the amount of burden (arising from premature deaths and disability) from that disease (see AIHW publications: *Australian Burden of Disease and Injury 2003*, p39-40; *Health system expenditure on disease and injury in Australia 2004-05*, p6).