

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: E12-177

OUTCOME 11: Mental Health

Topic: Mental Illness program

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Number of pages: 2

Senator: Senator Wright

Question:

In addition to the EPPICs and the Partners in Recovery program, what other programs and services are in place to assist people experiencing severe and persistent mental illness?

Answer:

In addition to EPPIC and Partners in Recovery, the Department manages a number of programs which target people with severe and persistent mental illness and which provide for the broad range of their needs, clinical and other. For instance:

- *Support for Day to Day Living (D2DL) in the Community* funds a range of community based non-government organisations to provide structured activities to help improve independent living skills. Following the 2011-12 Budget, an extra \$19.3 million over five years was provided for the Program.
- *Mental Health Nurse Incentive Program* provides non-MBS incentive payments to general practices, private psychiatry practices, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander medical services and Medicare Locals as well as a range of private hospitals to engage mental health nurses to assist in the provision of coordinated clinical care for people with severe mental disorders. The 2012-13 Budget provided additional funding of \$16.5 million bringing total funding for 2012-13 to \$35.6 million, so that services under the Program can be maintained at 2011-12 service levels while a comprehensive evaluation of the program is undertaken.
- A *National Partnership Supporting National Mental Health Reform (NP)*, agreed by COAG on 13 April 2012, is providing \$200 million over five years to help states and territories fill gaps in mental health and related support services for people with mental illness. The NP will particularly benefit people with severe and persistent mental illness who are frequent users of emergency departments who need stable accommodation to keep well and break the cycle of hospitalisation and homelessness. Priority areas of activity under the NP include:
 - stable accommodation and support for those with mental illness; and

- presentation, admission and discharge planning in emergency departments and major hospitals, and related support services.

FaHCSIA also administers three community based mental health services under the Targeted Community Care (Mental Health) Program to assist people with mental illness and their families and carers to manage the impact of mental illness. Two of these services in particular assist people with severe and persistent mental illness:

- The 2011/12 Budget provided \$154 million (over 5 years) for the *Personal Helpers and Mentors* (PHaMS) Program to fund non-government organisations to employ an additional 425 personal helpers and mentors to assist an additional 3,400 people with severe mental illness. \$50 million (of the \$154 million) will be allocated to provide personal helpers and mentors to specifically help people with mental illness claiming income support or the Disability Support Pension who are also working with employment services.
- The 2011/12 Budget provided \$54.3 million for *Mental Health Respite: Carer Support* to expand respite services to assist around 1,100 families and carers.