

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Budget Estimates 2011-2012, 30/31 May and 1 June 2012

Question: E12-182

OUTCOME 11: Mental Health

Topic: Suicide Prevention

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Number of pages: 2

Senator: Senator Wright

Question:

- a) Can you please provide an update on the total amount allocated in this year's budget towards suicide prevention programs?
- b) Can you please describe the programs and services that will benefit from these funds?
- c) Do any of these programs and services target high risk groups and if so please list the groups targeted?
- d) Are the programs and services funded under this year's Budget new or existing?
- e) Can you provide details of the annual amount allocated over the past five years' Budgets towards suicide prevention programs?

Answer:

- a) In 2012-13 \$58.91 million has been allocated to suicide prevention specific activity, comprising:
 - \$25.40m under the National Suicide Prevention Program (NSPP); and
 - \$33.51m for specific activity under the *Mental health: Taking Action to Tackle Suicide* (TATS) package.

In addition, other mental health services and programs and broader health initiatives, including drug and alcohol treatment also contribute to efforts to prevent suicide.

- b) Funding is provided through the NSPP for community-based projects that deliver activities at a local and national level. Other national core activities have a whole of population focus.

There are currently 54 national and community based projects funded under the NSPP.

The TATS package comprises a mixture of suicide prevention specific activities and broader initiatives which build on the NSPP. In 2012-13, the suicide prevention specific activities include:

- more psychological services for people who have attempted or are at risk of suicide - *Access To Allied Psychological Services* program available through Medicare Locals (\$8.01m);
- boosting the capacity of crisis hotlines, including Lifeline (\$6.05m);
- 'Mental Health First Aid' training for frontline community workers (\$2.35m);
- improving safety at 'hotspots' (\$3.0m);
- community prevention activities for high risk groups (\$7.85m); and
- Outreach teams to schools (\$6.25m).

- c) In addition to broad population health approaches, high risk groups within the community are a specific target of the Commonwealth suicide prevention activities. The Australian Suicide Prevention Advisory Council has identified the following high risk groups for targeted suicide prevention funding:

- men;
- young people;
- gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersex people;
- aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples;
- people bereaved by suicide;
- people with a mental illness; and
- people living in rural and remote areas.

- d) The NSPP was first announced as part of the 2000 Budget, and the TATS package was first appropriated through the Mid Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook (MYEFO) 2010-11 process on 9 November 2010.

- e) Since 2008-09, in addition to broader mental health investment, the NSPP and the suicide prevention specific measures under TATS (as outlined at b.) have received the following allocations (combined):

- 2008-09: \$20.63m
- 2009-10: \$22.15m
- 2010-11: \$24.18m
- 2011-12: \$55.20m
- 2012-13: \$58.91m