

Senate Select Committee on COVID-19
Inquiry into the Australian Government's response to the COVID-19

QUESTION ON NOTICE / Spoken

QoN 004 7 May 2021

Topic: India travel measures

Senator Rachel Siewert

Question

Senator SIEWERT: We had evidence this morning that people weren't being able to access those forms of support from services in Australia. Are you aware of that?

High Commissioner O'Farrell: No, I didn't hear the evidence this morning—I had early meetings—but I'm happy to look at that transcript. I'm not quite sure what the suggestion is. Is it that they weren't getting support from Australia or is it that they weren't able to access it, physically?

Senator SIEWERT: They weren't able to access it. The services weren't able to provide support, into India, to the people who were trying to access support services in Australia from India.

High Commissioner O'Farrell: I'm happy to check with my teams across India to see whether they've had complaints about that, and if they have I'm happy to advise.

Senator SIEWERT: Thank you.

Answer

- There have been a few occasions in which consular clients have advised the Australian High Commission, New Delhi that they have been unable to access Australian mental health services from India.
- The Australian High Commission has advised clients that the Lifeline online chat function is available 24/7 and can be accessed from outside Australia and that clients can call the Consular Emergency Centre 24/7 and ask to be connected to Lifeline.