

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY QUESTION ON NOTICE

Department of Health

Senate Select Committee on COVID-19

Australian Government's Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic

21 August 2020

PDR Number: IQ20-000568

Veterans who have passed away in aged care facilities:

Spoken

Hansard Page number: 20

Senator: Murray Watt

Question:

Senator WATT: Minister, we have asked some questions about the number of older Australians who have passed away in aged-care facilities. Do you have any figures on the number of veterans who have passed away from COVID while in aged-care facilities?

Senator Colbeck: No, I don't have that level of granularity, I'm sorry.

Senator WATT: Is that something the department has compiled? Can it be taken on notice?

Mr Lye: We'd be happy to take that on notice and see if we can find that.

Answer:

As at 27 August 2020, there have been eleven (11) COVID-19 related deaths of Department of Veterans' Affairs clients who were residents of aged care facilities. Of these:

- four (4) were veterans
- five (5) were war widows
- two (2) were partners of veterans.

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Australian Government's Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic

21 August 2020

PDR Number: IQ20-000569

Workforce

Spoken

Hansard Page number: 21

Senator: Murray Watt

Question:

Senator WATT: You've known since March, you say, that a COVID outbreak could lead to a serious workforce shortage. When was the Prime Minister first briefed about that risk?

Senator Colbeck: Look, I'd have to take on notice specific meetings, but we announced on 11 March—so only a week or so after the commencement of Dorothy Henderson Lodge as an outbreak—our \$101 million surge workforce plan. So the work for that had commenced clearly prior to that announcement, because the decision had to go through our approval process as government.

Answer:

Since January 2020, representatives from the Department of Health, including the Chief Medical Officer, have provided frequent briefings to the Prime Minister on a range of issues related to COVID-19, including aged care workforce and preparedness.