

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY QUESTION ON NOTICE

Department of Health

Senate Select Committee on COVID-19

Australian Government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic

13 May 2020

PDR Number: IQ20-000228

Question Subject: Discussion between Tasmanian Government and Federal Government on PPE

Type of Question: Written

Senator: Katy Gallagher

Question:

Was there a discussion/negotiation between the Tasmanian State Government and the Federal government over access to this PPE?

Answer:

State and territory governments request supplies from the National Medical Stockpile (NMS) by completing a request form signed by their jurisdiction's Chief Health Officer. The request form seeks information relating to the number and type of product required, additional information or instructions and asks for the reasons why the stock is required.

Requests are reviewed and are assessed as to whether the NMS has the appropriate types or quantities of stocks to support the request (either fully or partially). Discussions occur at an officer-level. The deployment is then approved by the Secretary or Chief Medical Officer of the Australian Government Department of Health in line with the agreed process for meeting requests from the states.

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Tasmanian State Government has requested access to PPE from the NMS on four occasions in line with the process outlined above. All of these requests have been either fully or partially fulfilled by the Australian Government Department of Health.

The availability and use of PPE has also been discussed several times at meetings of Health Department Chief Executive Officers (AHMAC) at which Tasmania officials have been present and participated.

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Federal assistance with staffing at the NW Tasmanian hospitals

Written

Senator : Katy Gallagher

Question

When did the Commonwealth receive requests from the Tasmanian Government seeking Federal assistance with staffing of the NW Tasmanian hospitals to allow them to close? Who made this approach and to whom was it made?

Answer:

On 12 April 2020, Tasmania Health submitted a joint Australian Medical Assistance Team / Australian Defence Force DACC (Defence Aid to the Civil Community) request for direct support to Northwest Regional Health services to maintain provision of essential emergency care services.