

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY QUESTION ON NOTICE

Department of Health

Senate Select Committee on COVID-19

Inquiry into Australian Government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic

Spoken Question on Notice, 23 July 2021

PDR Number: IQ21-000151

Infection occurrence in Parklea facility

Spoken

Hansard Page number: 23

Senator: Rachel Siewert

Question:

Senator SIEWERT: Could you tell me how many people in Parklea have actually contracted COVID?

Mr Mulhall: My understanding—I don't have this morning's information, so forgive me if it has moved on since last evening. We understand three have tested positive and we're awaiting results for a further two.

Senator SIEWERT: How did COVID occur? How did the infection occur? How did it enter the facility?

Mr Mulhall: I don't have that information available to me. I'll take that on notice. I don't have that information with me.

Senator SIEWERT: Was it a worker?

Mr Mulhall: I don't have that information, Senator. I'll take that on notice.

Senator SIEWERT: Why don't you have that information? Surely this is vital information?

Mr Mulhall: Senator, the monitoring of individual cases is managed through the national disability quality and safety commission. I don't, as a matter of rule, track every case. Indeed, the task force does not track every case. I anticipated this question, but, to be frank, I don't have that individual personal information available to me. Given the question has come up, I will take it on notice.

CHAIR: Senator Siewert, I think the officer has agreed to take it on notice.

Answer:

The Commonwealth Department of Health receives daily reporting from states and territories on COVID-19 cases that have been diagnosed in their jurisdiction. Information is provided to the Commonwealth to inform national reporting on the situation, as well as to understand the epidemiological characteristics of cases to inform national public health response actions and policies.

States and territories are responsible for coordinating the local public health response associated with each case, including contact tracing, testing and implementation of local public health measures relevant to the context of current cases.

The National COVID Vaccine Taskforce is provided information on COVID-19 infections in residential disability accommodation settings to support arrangements for the delivery of vaccination services. The Taskforce does not hold specific information on how infections occur. Information about specific cases and/or clusters is best sought from the respective state or territory.