

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY QUESTION ON NOTICE

Department of Health

Senate Select Committee on COVID-19

Australian Government's Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic

Written Question received 21 August 2020

PDR Number: IQ20-000521

Aged Care Response Centres being established in other states

Written

Senator: Rachel Siewert

Question:

Are bodies similar to the Victorian Aged Care Response Centre being negotiated with other states? Where are these bodies located and what kind of financial, workforce and other support will accompany these centres?

Answer:

Yes.

On 21 August 2020 National Cabinet agreed to a range of measures to boost the capacity of jurisdictions to respond to COVID-19 outbreaks in residential aged care and immediate actions aimed at supporting providers and bolstering the public health response. This included planning for the standing up of joint health aged care emergency response centres and the release of the Australian Health Protection Principle Committee's (AHPPC) *Guide to the Establishment of Aged Care Emergency Response Centres*.

On 7 September 2020, AHPPC endorsed advice from its Aged Care Advisory Group that each state and territory should establish aged care emergency response centres, further to measures already in place.

On 18 September National Cabinet noted that all states and territories are on track with establishing and/or scaling up virtual or physical aged care emergency response centres with further practical action being undertaken to ensure a high level of preparedness. Within each jurisdictions public health response structure a dedicated aged care emergency response team has been established and key personnel identified at the state and Commonwealth level.

Bilateral engagement between the Australian Government and each state and territory is continuing in order to finalise joint emergency response structures and logistical arrangements including workforce to scale as required.