

**Senate Finance and Public Administration Committee**

**ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**HEALTH PORTFOLIO**

**Budget Estimates 2016 - 2017, 26 May 2017**

**Ref No:** SQ17-000513

**OUTCOME:** 2 - Health Access and Support Services

**Topic:** Terms of reference

**Type of Question:** Hansard Page 58, 26 May 2017

**Senator:** Siewert, Rachel

**Question:**

Senator SIEWERT: Could I ask a question on notice?

CHAIR: Of course.

Senator SIEWERT: Could you provide the terms of reference for the task force?

Ms Wallace: Certainly.

**Answer:**

The Terms of Reference for the cross-portfolio working group is attached.

## **Terms of Reference**

### **Indigenous Social and Cultural Determinants of Health Working Group**

The social and cultural determinants of health, including education, employment, and contact with the justice system, systemic racism, and housing, contribute to at least 31 per cent of the gap in life expectancy between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and non-Indigenous people.

The *Implementation Plan for the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Plan 2013-2023* (Implementation Plan) is the blueprint for accelerating progress on closing the gap in health outcomes. To cement gains and ensure progress on closing the gap, the 2018-2023 iteration will include strategies and actions to address the social and cultural determinants of health.

#### **Role of the Working Group**

The next iteration of the Implementation Plan, and the development of approaches to address the social and cultural determinants of health, relies on increased engagement across the Commonwealth, with state and territory governments and with the Indigenous Health sector. Proposed approaches will need to be developed in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

The Working Group will be tasked to:

- develop a suite of evidence-based recommendations to form the blueprint to address the social and cultural determinants of health in the next iteration of the Implementation Plan; and
- prepare a Submission that includes the blueprint for consideration by Government.

To achieve these tasks, the Working Group will:

- identify specific initiatives currently providing good outcomes for Indigenous communities (particularly those that provide holistic, wrap-around services) and consider options for broader implementation;
- identify potential opportunities and gaps in Commonwealth policy and programs aimed at reducing the disparities in health and wellbeing between Indigenous people and non-Indigenous people;
- consider options to improve levels of coordination and collaboration of existing efforts at the local, state and Commonwealth level;
- consider options to better target cross-portfolio investment to improve Indigenous health outcomes and close the gap;
- engage with the Implementation Plan Advisory Group to ensure that Indigenous health leaders are partners in the development of approaches to address the social and cultural determinants of health; and
- ensure that proposed approaches recognise the importance of culture as an enabling, protecting and healing factor for the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

#### **Membership**

The Working Group will be led by Ms. Bobbi Campbell, First Assistant Secretary, Indigenous Health Division, Commonwealth Department of Health.

The Working Group will be staffed by officers from the Department of Health, who will be joined by seconded policy and program officers from the:

- Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet;
- Department of Education and Training;
- Department of Employment; and
- Department of Social Services.

The Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development has been invited to participate at a senior level. Other representatives, including from the Department of Communications and the Arts, the Department of Environment and Energy, and the Attorney-General's Department, will be co-opted in to the Working Group to support the development of the work, as required.

### **Monitoring**

The Working Group will report progress monthly to Secretaries Board through the Indigenous Health Roundtable.

The Indigenous Health Roundtable is chaired by the First Assistant Secretary of Indigenous Health Division, Department of Health. The Indigenous Health Roundtable membership presently includes senior executive from Commonwealth Agencies including the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet.

From early 2017, the Roundtable will be expanded to include the permanent representation of senior executive from the Department of Education and Training, Department of Employment, and the Department of Social Services. Other relevant agencies will be engaged as required.

### **Timeframes**

The Working Group is expected to be operational from late-2016 to mid-2017. The role of the Working Group is expected to be completed within this timeframe.

The Working Group will provide a final report with recommendations for cross-portfolio approaches.

These recommendations will also inform the new deliverables under Domain 7 for the next iteration of the Implementation Plan.

