

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Cross Portfolio Indigenous Hearing 2011-2012, 17 February 2012

Question: E12-186

OUTCOME 8: Indigenous Health

Topic: ESTABLISHING QUALITY HEALTH STANDARDS MEASURE

Written Question on Notice

Senator Boyce asked:

In relation to continuous quality improvement:

- a) What streams of funding are available to AMS for this purpose? How much in total was available last year for maintaining standards?
- b) Is there any bias in the program towards achieving first time accreditation (due to the targets that were set) rather than maintaining standards?
- c) Have the savings measures in the current budget (BP2 p217) of \$10.8 million over four years reduced the Governments capacity to provide such quality improvement assistance to Indigenous health organisations?

Answer:

- a) Accreditation is one of the tools available to assist quality improvement processes within organisations. The 2011-12 Federal Budget allocated \$35 million until June 2015 under the *Establishing Quality Health Standards-Continuation* (EQHS-C) measure to support eligible Indigenous health organisations to achieve accreditation/certification under mainstream Australian healthcare standards. In 2010-11, \$12.6 million was available for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health organisations to achieve first time accreditation or to maintain their organisational accreditation status.
- b) The *EQHS-C* measure provides funding for eligible Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health organisations to achieve first time accreditation under mainstream Australian healthcare standards. The measure also supports maintenance of accreditation by allocating \$20,000 per annum to accredited organisations to maintain their organisational accreditation status.
- c) There has been no reduction in the Government's capacity to provide quality improvement assistance to eligible Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health organisations as a result of the reduced funding for the *EQHS-C* measure in the 2011-12 Budget.