

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Additional Estimates 2011-2012, 15 February 2012

Question: E12-049

OUTCOME 1: Population Health

Topic: NATIONAL HEPATITIS STRATEGY

Written Question on Notice

Senator Payne asked:

- a) The 3rd National Hepatitis Strategy was approved by COAG health ministers in April 2010. I understand that the strategy is to be implemented by next year (2013). Can you please provide an update on the status of implementation of this strategy, including: the respective roles of the Commonwealth, states and territories; programs that have been announced or commenced as part of the strategy's implementation; and any targets that governments are seeking to meet as part of the overall strategy?
- b) Can you please provide details on the funding committed to this strategy, including details of the Commonwealth's committed funding, what aims that funding will have, and the amount of funding the states and territories have committed to the program?
- c) Does the Commonwealth, in conjunction with the jurisdictions or alone, have plans to review the strategy and its implementation, to determine what measures are assisting, what targets are being met and what changes to strategy or funding may be required into the future?

Answer:

- a) An implementation plan for the national strategies was developed by the Department of Health and Ageing in consultation with the Ministerial Advisory Committee on Blood Borne Viruses and Sexually Transmissible Infections (MACBBVS) and the Australian Health Ministers' Advisory Council's Blood Borne Viruses and Sexually Transmissible Infection Subcommittee (BBVSS) (the membership of which includes jurisdictional representatives), following extensive consultation with stakeholders.

Each of the national strategies includes performance indicators against which the objectives of the national strategies can be measured. A Surveillance and Monitoring Plan developed in consultation with the states and territories details how each of the indicators in the national strategies will be measured and reported. Performance indicators will be reported against on an annual basis in the annual Surveillance and Monitoring Report.

- b) To meet the Commonwealth's commitments within the national strategies seven Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) and four National Research Centres (NRCs) have been funded to undertake a variety of projects. The Department allocated \$5.9 million in 2011-12 to NGOs for BBV and STI education and prevention activities.

A further \$9.3 million in 2011-12 was provided to four NRCs to provide epidemiological data and undertake Blood Borne Viruses (BBV) and Sexually Transmissible Infections (STI) clinical and social research, HIV and hepatitis virology research, and research focusing on sex, health and society. These figures include funding for BBVs and STIs including hepatitis C. In addition the Australian Government funds vaccinations for hepatitis B, along with medications and medical care for HIV, hepatitis B and C. It is not possible to disaggregate these figures as the funds are provided on a project basis, some of which cover priority actions in multiple national strategies. The amount of funding the states and territories are outlaying to meet their commitments under the national strategies is the responsibility of the states and territories.

- c) The implementation plan indicates that the progress of implementing the national strategies will be assessed 18 month after release of the national strategies, as well as at the conclusion of the term of the national strategies. Under the auspices of MACBBVS and BBVSS the Department will commence a mid-term review of the national strategies in mid 2012.