

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Additional Estimates 2011-2012, 15 February 2012

Question: E12- 206

OUTCOME 12: Health Workforce Capacity

Topic: MEDICAL SCHOOLS OUTCOMES DATABASE (MSOD)

Written Question on Notice

Senator Nash asked:

- a) Please provide the total annual funding provided by the Commonwealth Government for the Medical Schools Outcomes Database (MSOD) in each year since funding commenced (noting in separate columns where funding has been provided by the Department of Health and Ageing, Health Workforce Australia, NHMRC, ARC or other Commonwealth Government funding source).
- b) Please provide the total annual funding provided by State or Territory Governments (if any).
- c) Please break funding allocations into capital and recurrent.
- d) Please provide the performance criteria for funding of the MSOD set out by the Commonwealth Government (that is, what the MSOD was intended to do and the performance targets specified in the contract).
- e) Please specify whether all performance requirements were met in accordance with the contract in each given year.

Answer:

- a) The Department of Health and Ageing funded the Medical Schools Outcomes Database (MSOD) project from May 2004 to 30 June 2011. Health Workforce Australia (HWA) assumed responsibility for funding of the project for 2011-12. No funding has been provided for the project by other Commonwealth agencies or Departments such as the National Health and Medical Research Council or Australian Research Council.

Funding (GST inclusive) has been provided over the course of the project by the Department of Health and Ageing (2003-04 to 2010-11) and HWA (2011-12) as follows:

Year	DoHA
2003-04	\$100,000.00
2004-05	\$210,035.00
2005-06	\$200,000.00
2006-07	\$400,000.00
2007-08	\$368,242.00
2008-09	\$1,058,783.75
2009-10	\$925,517.25
2010-11	\$709,840.00
2011-12 (HWA)	\$720,000.00

- b) To the Department's knowledge, no funding has been supplied by state or territory governments.
- c) Funding under the agreements is not specified in terms of capital and recurrent expenditure.
- d) Each Department funding agreement had specified objectives and expected outcomes in relation to these, or in the case of the stage 3 agreement, specific deliverables for achievement over the project period. Objectives of stage 1 of the MSOD project were:
 1. To develop a nationally accepted approach across medical schools to the collection of student data.
 2. To develop an agreed minimum data set to be adopted by all medical schools, and nationally consistent definitions for key terms and concepts.
 3. To design, develop and pilot a national database which provides a reliable data source for medical schools and the Commonwealth for internal and external reporting requirements on the outcomes of education programs.

Stage 2 of the MSOD project had two specific short-term objectives:

1. To finalise the MSOD's operations, implement the data collection process at each medical school, and initiate annual reporting processes for medical schools, stakeholders and the Commonwealth.
2. Investigate the feasibility of using the MSOD and a unique identifier as the basis for a longitudinal tracking process over the medical education/ training/ practice continuum.

The contract also contained three general long-term objectives of the MSOD project.

1. Provide medical schools and the Commonwealth with an effective, reliable mechanism for evaluating the outcomes and determining the effectiveness of Commonwealth and university educational programs, particularly those aimed at addressing future medical workforce needs (rural health, areas of workforce need, Indigenous health, specialty areas, and others as they arise or are implemented);

2. Provide an information resource for research projects for Australian medical educators which will contribute to the national and international literature on medical education; and
3. Provide the Commonwealth with a secure, reliable source of accurate, up-to-date data for the purposes of effective long-term medical workforce planning.

Stage 3 was designated as a continuation of the MSOD project for the 2010-11 financial year.

Specified deliverables to be achieved included:

- Administration of the annual Commencing Medical Students Questionnaires to the 2011 commencing student cohorts;
- Administration of the 2010 Exit Questionnaire;
- Administration of the 2010 PGY1 Questionnaire;
- Annual collection of the Medical Schools Data (clinical placements, rural club membership and electives) on all participating medical students from the 2005 through to 2010 cohorts;
- Continuing further analyses of the MSOD data, linking data from various collections where possible to provide reports, publish articles in national and/or international refereed journals;
- Production of summary reports on the data collected in the 2010 entry, 2010 exit and PGY1 surveys, which will be made available publicly through the MDANZ website;
- Work with HWA to streamline the collection of clinical placements data to minimise workload for medical schools and increase efficiency and accuracy of data collection;
- Conduct of a national Stakeholder Advisory Committee meeting;
- A feasibility study to determine the implications, specifically on data quality, of changing from annual collection of data to less frequent collections for the Commencing Medical Students, Exit Questionnaires and PGY1 Questionnaires;
- Conversion of the MSOD data dictionary from Excel format to an Access database to enable better accessibility and maintenance of information;
- An analysis of Clinical placements data that will contribute to the information gathering process of mapping clinical placements; and
- Roll-out of the national relational database, including testing of database functionalities, migration of legacy data, setup of user accounts and medical school staff training.

HWA have advised the following activities are funded under the 2011-12 funding agreement:

- Administer the annual Commencing Medical Students Questionnaires (CMSQ) to 2011 and 2012 commencing student cohorts, with the expectation of response rates greater than 90 per cent;
 - Assess the feasibility of incorporating the Postgraduate Year (PGY)1 and PGY3 Questionnaire items into the core items collected for national registration 8;
 - Administer the collection of the annual Medical Schools Data (MSD) (includes clinical placements, rural club membership and electives) on all participating medical students from the 2006(Year 6), 2007 (Year 5), 2008 (Year 4), 2009 (Year 3), 2010(Year 2) and 2011(Year 1) and commencing cohorts;
 - Administer the Exit Questionnaire (EQ) to MSOD cohorts graduating in 2011 and 2012 with the expectation of response rates greater than 85 per cent;
 - Preparation of the 2011 CMSQ, 2011 EQ, 2011 PGY1Q and 2010 MSD data for release and production of national and individual school reports;
 - Administer the PGY 1 Questionnaire to the MSOD cohorts graduating from medical school in 2010 and 2011;
 - Administer the PGY 3 Questionnaire to the MSOD cohorts graduating from medical school in 2008 and 2009;
 - Streamline the collection of clinical placements data to minimise workload for medical schools and increase efficiency and accuracy of data collection; and
 - Provision of de-identified unit record data to HWA from the 2011 CMSQ, 2011 EQ, 2011 PGY1Q and 2010 MSD data once the data has been collected and edited by the Participant.
- e) All objectives were achieved for stages 1 and 2. For stage 3, there were two variations to the work plan in relation to specified deliverables:
1. The National Stakeholder Advisory Committee meeting scheduled to be held before June 2011 did not take place, however funds allocated for this event were used to organise a research forum, which took place in November 2011 and included most stakeholders.
 2. Roll-out of the National Relational database did not progress as quickly as planned and testing will continue with the expectation to pilot the database at selected medical schools in 2012 before national implementation. A modified national relational database is now in operation.