

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Additional Estimates 2011-2012, 15 February 2012

Question: E12-300

OUTCOME 1: Population Health

Topic: ALCOHOL POLICY

Senator Fierravanti-Wells asked:

Further to the answer which was provided in response to Question E11-336 re National Alliance for Action on Alcohol:

- a) Mr Daube is an alcohol adviser according to the ANPHA website as no other member of the research committee is so described. Mr Daube is running the alcohol research agenda of the ANPHA - a body which he was paid money to advise to establish, and then he got himself appointed to. Is this not a conflict of interest?
- b) Please provide to the Estimates Committee all of the advice from the Commonwealth funded ANPHA Research Committee to the CEO concerning alcohol related research funding.
- c) Has Mr Daube ever supported alcohol research into examining the health benefits of alcohol? If yes, please provide details of this.

Answer:

- a) There is no reference on the Australian National Preventative Health Agency (ANPHA) website to Professor Daube as an "alcohol adviser" to ANPHA. The ANPHA website lists each committee member's contributing expertise. For example, Professor Emerita Meredith Edwards' contributing expertise for the Research Committee is listed as "translational research"; Professor Melanie Wakefield's contributing expertise is listed as "tobacco control". Professor Daube's contributing expertise was listed as "prevention of alcohol abuse and tobacco control". Professor Daube was previously a member of the ANPHA Research Committee but has since retired from it.

No single individual on any of ANPHA's advisory committees "runs" the Agency's agenda in any field. Each of the committees collectively, as distinct from any single individual, provide advice to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

Please also refer to the responses of Ms Halton and Ms Sylvan at Senate Estimates Hansard, Wednesday, 15 February 2012, pages 100-101.

- b) The Research Committee provides general advice to the CEO about improving Australian preventive health research. This advice is informing the development of a national preventive health research strategy. The Research Committee also provides advice to the CEO about the suitability for funding of applications in ANPHA's recent investigator-driven research grant round. Four of the successful thirteen projects were about harmful alcohol consumption. The call for research related to ANPHA's focus areas of tobacco, obesity and harmful use of alcohol.

- c) Professor Daube is an independent researcher with a long academic history and ANPHA is not in a position to speak to the research activities he has undertaken.