

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Additional Estimates 13 & 15 February 2013

Question: E13-013

OUTCOME 12: Health Workforce Capacity

Topic: HEALTH WORKFORCE FUND

Type of Question: Hansard Page 61, 13 February 2013

Senator: Senator Fierravanti-Wells

Question:

To the best of your knowledge, what rural programs that were consolidated into the Health Workforce Fund are likely to continue beyond 2014-15?

Answer:

A review of Australian Government health workforce programs is currently being undertaken. The review was announced as part of the 2012-13 Budget process. Minister Plibersek appointed Ms Jennifer Mason as the independent Chair to lead the Health Workforce Program Review (HWP Review), to analyse the appropriateness, effectiveness and efficiency of programs in terms of meeting key health workforce objectives and priorities, including emerging issues.

Once Ms Mason has provided the final HWP Review report the Government will consider policy responses to its recommendations. This may impact on decisions about future funding arrangements for programs within the Health Workforce Fund (HWF).

The rural health workforce programs under the HWF that currently have allocations under the forward estimates 2012-13 to 2015-16, are:

- The National Rural and Remote Health Workforce Program:
 - CRANplus Bush Service Support;
- Rural and Remote General Practice Program;
- Remote Vocational Training Scheme;
- Medical Rural Bonded Scholarships Scheme;
- Rural Australia Medical Undergraduate Scholarship Scheme;
- Diagnostic Imaging: Enhancing Rural and Remote Workforce Scheme;
- GP Anaesthetic Locum Scheme;
- HECS Reimbursement Scheme;
- Nursing and Allied Health Rural Locum Scheme;
- Rural Health Continuing Education Program including the Rural Health Education Foundation;
- Rural Health Multidisciplinary Training Program:
 - Dental Training Expanding Rural Placements Program
 - John Flynn Placement Program

- Rural Undergraduate Support and Coordination Program
 - University Departments of Rural Health
- Rural Health Workforce Strategy – Scaling Rural Workforce Communications
 - Rural Health Champions Program;
- Rural Locum Education and Assistance Program;
- Rural Procedural Grants Program; and
- Supporting Rural Health – Specialist Obstetrician Locum Scheme.

It should be noted that a range of other programs funded under the HWF have rural elements (e.g. targets or loadings, such as the Practice Nurse Incentive Payments Scheme) but have not been included in this list as they are not exclusively “rural programs”, even though they have allocations under the forward estimates.