

**Senate Community Affairs Committee**

**ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO**

**Additional Estimates 13 & 15 February 2013**

**Question:** E13-158

**OUTCOME 1:** Population Health

**Topic:** Antimicrobial Resistance

**Type of Question:** Written Question on Notice

**Senator:** Senator Di Natale

**Question:**

Does the Commission agree with the following statement: "Prior to the formation of Antimicrobial Resistance Standing Committee there has been no national coordination of activities, comprehensive national reports on antibiotic use and resistance or the ability to link antimicrobial usage and resistance data at a national level. Moreover, there is no single entity that fulfils such a role at a national level."?

**Answer:**

In Australia, the states and territories have primary responsibility for the surveillance and management of infections in hospitals and public health infection control, including ensuring appropriate clinical treatment and managing the risks of Healthcare Associated Infections. The Australian Government has a similar responsibility in the areas of aged care and general practice. There are a number of Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) surveillance activities that have been developed by state and territory jurisdictions as part of their primary responsibility for managing infection control, and several nationally coordinated AMR surveillance initiatives funded by the Commonwealth. These include:

- state and territory government programs for monitoring AMR such as Healthcare Associated Infection Surveillance Western Australia; Centre for Healthcare-Related Infection Surveillance and Prevention (Queensland); Victorian Nosocomial Infection Surveillance System; and Tasmanian Infection Prevention and Control Unit;
- the Australian Group on Antimicrobial Resistance (AGAR) provides prevalence data on important AMR pathogens in Australian hospitals and the community;
- the National Antimicrobial Usage Surveillance Program collects data on antibiotic consumption from hospitals in all Australian states and territories; and
- high-quality, accredited pathology services, which contain key information on bacteria and their resistance patterns, and contribute to regional surveillance networks for monitoring AMR in the Asia-Pacific region and South Africa through the SENTRY antimicrobial surveillance program.