

**Senate Community Affairs Committee**

**ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**HEALTH PORTFOLIO**

**Additional Estimates 2015 - 2016, 10 February 2016**

**Ref No: SQ16-000058**

**OUTCOME:** 1 - Population Health

**Topic:** Drug Strategy

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

**Senator:** Gallagher, Katy

**Question:**

Since \$78.6 million has been diverted from Indigenous health to this ice package component, can we expect the PHN's to dedicate extra energies to supporting the alcohol and drug treatment sector for Indigenous people?

**Answer:**

Funding of \$78.6 million will be specifically allocated to Indigenous-specific drug and alcohol treatment services. There is also an expectation that culturally appropriate mainstream treatment services will be able to be accessed by Indigenous Australians, based on need and the population profile of the region, enabling more options.

In addition, the funding formula for the allocation of funding to Primary Health Networks (PHNs) will be weighted for Indigenous population, remoteness and social disadvantage to properly represent the treatment-seeking population. In addition to the Indigenous-specific funds which will be quarantined and reported separately, PHNs through their needs assessment can also further target Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people using mainstream funding, should that be indicated.

In identifying service needs and how services will be commissioned and delivered, PHNs will be required to include specific activities funded to address the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

As part of the commissioning process, PHNs will be required to pursue holistic approaches to Indigenous drug and alcohol treatment that are culturally safe, competent and respectful. The Department is providing advice to PHNs to this effect regarding the development of solutions to harmful drug and alcohol abuse, consistent with the overarching principles of the *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' Drug Strategy* 2014-2019.

PHNs will determine need according to agreed evidence and based on population planning and available data in consultation with existing services, including Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations.

PHNs have been advised to consult and engage with the Community Controlled sector in their areas as a priority.