

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Additional Estimates 2015 - 2016, 10 February 2016

Ref No: SQ16-000216

OUTCOME: 9 - Biosecurity and Emergency Response

Topic: Lyme Disease

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Senator: Madigan, John

Question:

In October I asked about what the Department of Health has done about making Doctors aware of tick borne diseases – other than Lyme disease – Anaplasma, Mycoplasma and Rickettsia. You referred me only to the Lyme disease page of your website which does not answer the question. Again, I ask this question as two recent research papers, the result of an ARC grant, indicate that Australia ticks are carrying significant amounts of known pathogens.

Answer:

The Commonwealth Chief Medical Officer (CMO), Professor Baggooley has forwarded the two recent research papers by Professor Peter Irwin et al to medical practitioners. These two papers outline in more detail the nature of the tick microbiome. Further work is required to determine the role these bacteria have in human tick-borne disease.