

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Additional Estimates 2015 - 2016, 10 February 2016

Ref No: SQ16-000297

OUTCOME: 0 - Whole of Portfolio

Topic: Minimum Data Sets

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Senator: Rice, Janet

Question:

Mr Cormack: We certainly recognise that risk. We do understand the impact of uncertainty. That is why we try to progress these necessary processes of accountability for public funds as quickly as we possibly can.

Senator RICE: Finally, I have a question broader than mental health. It is about the minimum datasets reportable to the Commonwealth by the states. My understanding is that country of birth, language spoken at home or ethnicity are not part of these minimum standards, which of course makes it extremely difficult to get any data nationally about populations and subpopulations. I just wanted to clarify if that was the case.

Mr Cormack: We might be in a different area there.

Mr Bowles: Yes, we are in a different space now.

Senator RICE: I was told that it was going to be fine to ask this question here. Could you maybe take it on notice?

Mr Bowles: Yes, we can take it on notice.

Senator RICE: Also, whether the department has looked into adding to these standards, because we need to have that data to be able to make appropriate policy decisions for different communities.

Mr Bowles: We can take that issue on notice.

Answer:

Information regarding patient's ethnicity, country of birth and language spoken at home is not collected in all of the National Minimum Datasets (NMDS). However, country of birth is collected in the Admitted and Non-Admitted Patient Care hospital collections as well as the Admitted Patient Mental Health collection. Preferred language is also collected in some of the Mental Health and Alcohol and Other Drugs collections. Ethnicity is not collected in any of the NMDS collections.

Country of birth and preferred language data are not reported in publications released by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) because of reliability issues within the data. Additionally data collected from private health insurers and private hospitals do not include patient's ethnicity, country of birth or language spoken at home. A list of which NMDSs include this information is provided below.

The Department of Health works collaboratively with the AIHW and jurisdictions to expand NMDSs with useful data items. The inclusion of new data items in the NMDSs is subject to the quality and availability of each data item.

National Minimum Data Set	Person—Indigenous status, code N	Person—country of birth, code (SACC 2011) NNNN	Person—main language other than English spoken at home, code (ASCL 2011) NN{NN}	Person—preferred language, code (ASCL 2011) NN{NN}
Health registration authority				
Admitted patient care NMDS 2015-16	Included	Included	Not included	Not included
Admitted patient mental health care NMDS 2015-16	Included	Included	Not included	Not included
Admitted patient palliative care NMDS 2015-16	Included	Included	Not included	Not included
Alcohol and other drug treatment services NMDS 2015-	Included	Included	Not included	Included
Community mental health care NMDS 2015-16	Included	Included	Not included	Not included
Elective surgery waiting times (census data) NMDS 2015-16	Included	Not included	Not included	Not included
Elective surgery waiting times (removals data) NMDS 2015-16	Included	Not included	Not included	Not included
Government health expenditure NMDS 2014-	Not included	Not included	Not included	Not included
Mental health establishments NMDS 2015-16	Not included	Not included	Not included	Not included
Non-admitted patient care hospital aggregate NMDS 2015-16	Not included	Not included	Not included	Not included
Non-admitted patient emergency department care NMDS 2015-16	Included	Included	Not included	Not included
Perinatal NMDS 2014-	Included	Included	Not included	Not included
Public dental waiting times NMDS 2013-	Included	Included	Not included	Included
Public hospital establishments NMDS 2015-16	Not included	Not included	Not included	Not included
Radiotherapy waiting times NMDS 2015-	Included	Not included	Not included	Not included
Residential mental health care NMDS 2015-16	Included	Included	Not included	Not included
Early childhood registration authority				
Early Childhood Education and Care: Aggregate NMDS 2015	Included	Not included	Not included	Not included
Early Childhood Education and Care: Unit Record Level NMDS 2015	Included	Not included	Not included	Not included
Disability registration authority				
Disability Services NMDS 2015–16	Included	Included	Not included	Not included
Housing Assistance and Homelessness registration authorities				
Specialist Homelessness Services NMDS 2014-15	Included	Included	Not included	Not included