

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Additional Estimates 2016 - 2017, 1 March 2017

Ref No: SQ17-000270

OUTCOME: 6 - Ageing and Aged Care

Topic: Specialist Dementia Care Units

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Senator: Polley, Helen

Question:

- a) What progress has been made on the \$7.5 million commitment to establish 31 Specialist Dementia Care Units? When will the facilities be operational?
- b) Where will the units be based? Who will run the units? How will they be funded on an ongoing basis?
- c) How many dementia sufferers in Australia fall into the category of residents that would be cared for in these specialist units? Can you provide a breakdown by PHN?
- d) And how many places will be available, by PHN?
- e) How are people who will be cared for in these Specialist Dementia Care Units currently being cared for?

Answer:

The Australian Government has committed to establish at least one Specialist Dementia Care Unit (SDCU) in each of the 31 Primary Health Network (PHN) regions. The initiative is cost neutral over five years from 2016-17 to 2020-21.

The Department of Health has commenced program design consultation with key stakeholders, and will consult more broadly during 2017 as detailed planning and implementation progresses.

SDCU places will be created under the *Aged Care Act 1997* and be fully allocated to approved providers by 2020-21, with ongoing costs met within the future funding for residential aged care places. The SDCU places rollout schedule will be determined in close consultation with key stakeholders and providers. The number of places per unit will vary, with the specific locations within PHN regions based on demographic and population needs.

There are a range of existing supports for the care of people with dementia. SDCUs are the planned 'third tier' in programs to assist aged care consumers experiencing behavioural and psychological symptoms of dementia, complementing the existing Dementia Behaviour Management Advisory Service (DBMAS) ('tier 1') and Severe Behaviour Response Teams (SBRTs) ('tier 2'). Eligibility will target the small number of people with dementia, primarily in residential aged care, who exhibit very severe behaviours where longer term support beyond that provided by the other tiers is required.