

**Senate Community Affairs Committee**

**ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**HEALTH PORTFOLIO**

**Additional Estimates 2016 - 2017, 1 March 2017**

**Ref No:** SQ17-000421

**OUTCOME:** 2 - Health Access and Support Services

**Topic:** Roadmap for National Mental Health Reform 2012-2022

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

**Senator:** O'Neill, Deborah

**Question:**

For some time the Roadmap for national mental health reform 2012-2022 has not been available on the Department of Health's website. As late as 9 March, 2017 it was not on the website. There is a page dedicated to the roadmap with an explanation about what it was and that the page had been reviewed back in mid-2014. However, when you click on the roadmap link – there is no roadmap to be seen. What comes up instead is message 404.

a) Is the Turnbull Government and the Minister for Health still committed to progressing work around the roadmap? Is the information on the Department of Health's website about the roadmap up to date and accurate? If not, why not?

b) How often does the roadmap reference group that is chaired by the National Mental Health Commission meet? When was the last time this reference group met? The reference group assists the roadmap working group – can you list the people who are members of the reference and working groups? When did the working group last meet? Can the Department provide an update on what the working group has achieved in relation to the roadmap so far?

**Answer:**

The Council of Australian Governments (COAG) Roadmap for Mental Health Reform 2012-2022 is hosted on the COAG website. A recent refresh of the COAG website meant that the link provided on the Department of Health's website became broken. The Department is reviewing the website and it will be updated as appropriate.

COAG established a Working Group on Mental Health Reform following the National Mental Health Commission (the Commission) providing its first Report Card on Mental Health and Suicide Prevention in December 2012. COAG agreed to provide a response that would include national indicators and targets for mental health reform. The Commission was asked to chair an Expert Reference Group to support the Working Group. Both the Working Group and the Expert Reference Group have ceased.

Through its response to the Commission's *Review of Mental Health Services and Programmes*, the Australian Government is setting a new direction for mental health reform, titled 'Strengthening Mental Health in Australia'. The Australian Government is also working with state and territory Health Ministers on the development of the Fifth National Mental Health Plan.