

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Additional Estimates 2016 - 2017, 1 March 2017

Ref No: SQ17-000442

OUTCOME: 2 - Health Access and Support Services

Topic: Mental Health First Aid Training

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Senator: O'Neill, Deborah

Question:

How much funding is allocated to Mental Health First Aid Training? How many people are trained? How many organisations are involved? Can the Department provide a list of organisations and/or numbers of people by state and territory? How much funding is allocated to the delivery of mental health first aid instructor training?

Answer:

Since 2011, the Department of Health has allocated \$12,452,632 (GST exclusive) to three organisations for the delivery of national mental health first aid training and associated activities, consisting of:

- \$5,306,021 (GST exclusive) to Wesley Community Services Ltd;
- \$5,306,111 (GST exclusive) to Mental Health First Aid International; and
- \$1,840,500 (GST exclusive) to The Salvation Army Property Trust NSW.

From commencement to 31 December 2016, these organisations delivered mental health first aid training to a total of 34,896 people across Australia, consisting of:

- 7,004 frontline workers in the primary health care sector including general practitioners (GP), GP practice staff and aged care workers (Wesley Community Services Ltd);
- 24,904 financial counsellors, nursing and medical students (Mental Health First Aid International); and
- 2,988 frontline workers in a range of legal and paralegal fields (Salvation Army Property Trust).

The Department of Health does not have a breakdown of participants trained by individual jurisdiction, as funded organisations are not required to report this.

Similarly, the Department of Health does not collect information on the amount of funding allocated specifically to mental health first aid instructor training as mental health funding is administered on a whole-of-project basis in order to provide organisations with flexibility to meet demand.

However, according to the latest tranche of performance reports, 94 mental health first aid instructors are appropriately qualified to deliver tailored frontline mental health first aid courses.

Some Primary Health Networks (PHNs) commission mental health first aid training. PHNs do not routinely report training outputs or on the specific level of funding allocated for this activity.