

Senate Standing Committee on Community Affairs

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Budget Estimates 2011-2012**

Outcome 3 - Higher Education

DEEWR Question No.CA0007_12

Senator Siewert asked on 3/06/2011, Hansard page 48.

Question

Aged Care Workforce Fund.

Mr Griew: The only possible connection I can think of is that there was an initiative for training places in the aged care industry in another part of this portfolio in the budget.

Senator SIEWERT: Yes, that is where I am going, specifically as it relates to Indigenous.

Mr Griew: As we work with the new workforce agency that is being established that will administer that money, we will certainly, as we did previously with related packages, make sure that there are criteria that preference proposals with high Indigenous outcomes. Certainly one of the advantages we see in that direct work with industry is encouraging a full range of representation of the client groups in the workforce in aged care services.

Senator ARBIB: From memory, I am almost certain we have done an IEP project in terms of health workforce and aged care workforce. Is that the one you are talking about?

Senator SIEWERT: You have. As I understood it, there is the new initiative of combining a number of programs to set up the Aged Care Workforce Fund, and part of that specifically relates to provide targeted training strategies for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. I am interested in that component. That is why I am asking it today.

Mr Griew: There are many ways of naming programs, and there are many programs with similar names. I suspect that you should try asking that question again of our colleagues from the Department of Health and Ageing.

Senator ARBIB: That sounds like a Minister Snowden project, so you might want to raise that this afternoon. Mr Griew: We will pursue the one I was talking about, but I suspect you are actually after a different program.

Senator SIEWERT: If you could do that; If you could tell me what yours are, and I will get the others from Health;

Answer

Through the National Workforce Development Fund (NWDF) the Government will provide \$558 million from 2011-12 to 2014-15 to support training and workforce development in areas of current and future skills need. An industry co-contribution is required. This assistance will be focused on economically significant sectors with projected strong employment demand and occupations in demand across the economy. During 2011-12 funding will be available to support training and workforce development in all sectors with a focus on construction and aged care. The target group for the NWDF is employers who will be supported to train existing and new workers. Data on Indigenous participation will be collected.

DEEWR will continue to work together with Department of Health and Ageing (DoHA) to develop synergies between the NWDF and the Aged Care Workforce Fund. Further information on the Aged Care Workforce Fund should be sought from DoHA.