

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Budget Estimates 2012-2013, 1 June 2012

Question: E12-349

OUTCOME 8: Indigenous Health

Topic: The National Eye Health Initiative and *The Roadmap to Close the Gap in Vision* report

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Number of pages: 3

Senator: Senator Fierravanti-Wells

Question:

- a) Is OATSIH aware of the current status of the National Eye Health Initiative (NEHI)?
- b) What elements of the NEHI relevant to Indigenous Australians are expected to be delivered in 2012-13?
- c) Which organisations are responsible for delivering Indigenous Eye Health programs under the NEHI?
- d) What proportion of the Improving Eye and Ear Health Services for Indigenous Australians for Better Education and Employment Outcomes measure (in the 2009-10 Budget) is for eye health, and could the Department provide a breakdown between eye and ear initiatives by year since 2009-10?
- e) Has the OATSIH considered the work done by the University of Melbourne's Indigenous Eye Health Unit and specifically its report, *The Roadmap to Close the Gap for Vision*?
- f) What consideration has OATSIH given to this report?
- g) Does OATSIH concur with the reports findings in relation to the prevalence of eye health issues and the cost of closing the gap for vision?
- h) What actions will OATSIH take to implement the recommendations of this report? Has OATSIH raised the reports findings with State and Territory Health Departments?

Answer:

- a) Yes, it was consolidated into the Chronic Disease Prevention and Service Improvement Fund (CDPSIF) from 1 July 2011.
- b & c)
National Eye Health Initiative (NEHI) was consolidated into the CDPSIF from 1 July 2011. An open grant round under the CDPSIF was conducted in November 2011 however the Department of Health and Ageing is unable to provide details on the outcome of this funding round as negotiations have not been finalised.
- d) By 30 June 2012, approximately 40 per cent of the total expenditure of the allocation under this measure has been spent on eye health related projects.

Proportion of measure expenditure on eye and ear-health projects

	<i>2009-10 (%)</i>	<i>2010-11 (%)</i>	<i>2011-12 (%)</i>
Eye projects	47	42	34
Ear projects	53	58	66
<i>Total</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>

e) & f)

The Department has carefully considered the Roadmap report and other related reports produced by the University of Melbourne's Indigenous Eye Health Unit (the Unit), including informing programs and strategies to address Indigenous eye health issues.

- g) The Department agrees that there is a significant disparity in eye health outcomes between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. The Department has some concerns about the small size of the urban Indigenous cohort used in the National Indigenous Eye Health Survey conducted by the Unit in 2009, which may have flow on effects on the confidence intervals on which the findings were based, and on the resulting costings. This issue has been discussed with Professor Taylor.
- h) The Department will continue to utilise the Unit's research to inform programs and strategies to address Indigenous eye health issues.

SENATE ESTIMATES

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates 2012-2013, 30 & 31 May and 1 June 2012

Number: E12-349
Topic: National Eye Health Initiative and *The Roadmap to Close the Gap in Vision* report
Outcome: 8: Indigenous Health

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Minister

The attached proposed answer is submitted for information.


First Assistant Secretary

22/7/12
Date


Director
Parliamentary

24/7/12
Date

Noted


Adviser / Minister

10/8/12
Date