

**Senate Community Affairs Committee**

**ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**HEALTH PORTFOLIO**

**Budget Estimates 2014 - 2015, 2/3 June 2014**

**Ref No:** SQ14-000678

**OUTCOME:** 5 - Primary Health Care

**Topic:** Primary Care

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

**Senator:** McLucas, Jan

**Question:**

Please provide a detailed outline of the Government's strategy for primary care

**Answer:**

In 2014-15, a key focus will be to strengthen primary care by redirecting funding to frontline health services. The Government will move to establish Primary Health Networks (PHNs) from 1 July 2015, in line with the recommendations of the Review of Medicare Locals. There will be fewer, but larger, PHNs in the new network that will replace Medicare Locals.

PHNs will be clinically-focused and responsible for improving patient outcomes in their local areas by ensuring that services across the primary, community and secondary sectors align and work together in the interest of patients. These organisations will work with local providers and stakeholders to improve frontline services to better meet local needs.

The Government has committed to a range of initiatives to support primary care:

- Practice Incentives Program (PIP);
- GP infrastructure;
- additional funding for General Practice Rural Incentives Program (GPRIP);
- scholarships; and
- additional training places.