

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Budget Estimates 2017 - 2018, 30 May 2017

Ref No: SQ17-000516

OUTCOME: 6 - Ageing and Aged Care

Topic: High-Care Nursing homes - Staffing

Type of Question: Hansard Page 91

Senator: Polley, Helen

Question:

Senator POLLEY: We can move on, then, because there is a lot to cover. The New South Wales government recently voted against restoring the state based legislation that requires one registered nurse on duty at all times in high-care nursing homes but would refer the matter to COAG. What discussions has the department had with the New South Wales government about this?

Dr McCarthy: I am not aware of any specific discussions with the New South Wales government on that issue. I know it has been referred to COAG.

Senator POLLEY: So you will take it on notice?

Dr McCarthy: We can take that on notice.

Mr Bowles: I know it has been discussed at COAG or released at AHMAC. I do not think it has actually yet gone to the COAG Health Council. I could be wrong. But we will take that on notice.

Answer:

The New South Wales Government tabled a paper at the COAG Health Council on improving the quality and safety of residential aged care. The paper included a recommendation that Health Ministers agree to request the Commonwealth uses the opportunity provided by the current review of the aged care standards to ensure appropriate levels of nursing care in residential aged care facilities.

The Department of Health recently completed consultations on the Single Aged Care Quality Framework, including a new draft set of standards, receiving around 350 submissions. As part of this process, the New South Wales Government provided feedback, including that the standards require clinical care provided in residential aged care to be best practice and provided by a qualified clinician.