

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Budget Estimates 2017 - 2018, 30 May 2017

Ref No: SQ17-000518

OUTCOME: 6 - Ageing and Aged Care

Topic: Aged care facilities staffing

Type of Question: Hansard Page 93

Senator: Macdonald, Ian

Question:

Senator IAN MACDONALD: I am conscious that there was a Senate committee inquiry into staffing in aged-care facilities, so I do not want to waste too much time on that because we have a lot to get through. But are you conscious of difficulty in attracting staff to some rural and remote areas?

Dr McCarthy: Yes, we are aware of that. I am not sure whether you were here when Ms Rule mentioned that we know that some providers in some areas do have difficulty attracting staff.

Senator IAN MACDONALD: Is that something the government can do anything about?

Dr McCarthy: In rural and remote areas, depending on the location, there is a viability supplement for residential aged care. That is an additional amount of funding that is made available to qualifying services.

Senator IAN MACDONALD: An additional payment?

Dr McCarthy: That is an additional payment for qualifying services. There is something called the modified Monash model which, depending on location, it is determined whether a service qualifies. That is an additional amount of funding that can assist providers. We know that, particularly in remote areas and in some rural areas, there are a range of additional challenges that providers face.

Senator IAN MACDONALD: Do you have any data on what parts of Australia experience more difficulty than others? Do you keep that sort of data?

Ms Rule: We would have to take it on notice.

Answer:

The 2016 National Aged Care Workforce Census and Survey (the Census and Survey) data on staffing within residential aged care is available by remoteness area for the following measures:

- Proportion of residential facilities reporting skill shortages by location and occupation affected
- Average and median vacancy duration (weeks) for residential Registered Nurses and Personal Care Assistants

The Census and Survey also indicates the proportion of residential facilities that nominated “Geographic location of facility” as the cause of the shortage

For further information the Census and Survey can be found on the Department of Health website at <https://agedcare.health.gov.au/2016-NACWCS>