

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Budget Estimates 2017 - 2018, 29 May 2017

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OUTCOME: 0 - Whole of Portfolio

Topic: National Health Reform Working Group

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Senator: Watt, Murray

Question:

Mr Cormack: I am not going to play this game of who was invited and did not come, who should have been invited and did not come. I said I would take that on notice, but I can categorically say that the College of General Practitioners for one were certainly invited as part of this process. And I will take on record others. Yes, we think that certainly representatives of the medical profession were quite appropriate to consult on this and, indeed, were invited.

Senator WATT: I can see there is a rep of the College of GPs here, but GPs generally do not practise in hospitals, do they?

Mr Cormack: They are representative of the medical community that have a very valid role to play in referring their patients to a whole range of services, including those provided in the public and private hospital sectors. They are regularly asked to interpret the complexities of our healthcare system to their patients and, indeed, they bring a unique and valued perspective to a process such as this.

Senator WATT: I understand that—

Mr Bowles: And if you look at rural health, GPs operate in hospitals all the time.

Senator WATT: Sure. I understand that you might not remember every organisation who was invited to participate but let us narrow it down to some pretty well-known ones. Was the AMA invited to participate?

Mr Cormack: I have given my answer. I am not going to keep going through this process of you asking the same question and expecting a different answer. I said I will give you a list—

Senator WATT: I think the AMA is a fairly significant health stakeholder.

Mr Bowles: We are going to take it on notice.

CHAIR: They have said they will take that on notice.

Mr Bowles: We have said we will take on notice who and why. Again, this is one process, an insignificant process in the overall scheme of issues.

Answer:

The Australian Medical Association (AMA) was included on the draft participant list that the Department of Health received from Global Access Partners. The Department is unable to confirm if the AMA was subsequently invited by Global Access Partners as this information is not held by the Department.