

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Budget Estimates 2017 - 2018, 30 May 2017

Ref No: SQ17-000583

OUTCOME: 2 - Health Access and Support Services

Topic: Psychosocial supports

Type of Question: Hansard Page 14 Tuesday, 30 May 2017

Senator: O'Neill, Deborah

Question:

Senator O'NEILL: I have a couple of quick questions following on the excellent questions from my fellow senators. You indicated that you have corresponded with the states and territories around this matter. Would you be able to provide us with copies of that correspondence?

Mr Cormack: We will certainly take that request on notice.

Senator O'NEILL: Thank you very much. Would I be right in assuming that that letter might be some sort of audit of the current practices with regard to funding of mental health by the states?

Mr Cormack: I would not have thought that its prescriptive is an audit but we have asked them pretty specifically what they are currently doing and what they intend to do. I am not quite sure that we have been overwhelmed with responses just yet. I have just been corrected; that was a letter from the minister.

Senator O'NEILL: It was a letter from the minister and not a separate one from you?

Ms Cole: That is correct. There were two letters from the minister. One was prior to the budget where he asked his colleagues to indicate, in general terms, what they are planning to do in terms of psychosocial and their transition to the NDIS. Then there was a second letter post the budget which indicated that he wished to open discussions around the \$80 million.

Mr Cormack: Chair, I want to correct my earlier advice, which was that I thought the first letter was from the department. It is the same letter but it was actually from the minister. The second letter is post budget and the \$80 million measure. Thank you.

Ms Cole: In addition, we have had informal discussions at an official level in the last two months or so around what the states and territories may be thinking in terms of what they are going to do post transition.

Senator O'NEILL: Could you provide us with a copy of that correspondence?

Mr Cormack: We will certainly consult the minister on that and see if that can be made available.

Answer:

Copies of correspondence attached.