

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Budget Estimates 2017 - 2018, 29 May 2017

Ref No: SQ17-000584

OUTCOME: 4 - Individual Health Benefits

Topic: Adult Public Dental Services

Type of Question: Hansard Page 100, 29 May 2017

Senator: Singh, Lisa

Question:

Senator SINGH: This is a massive cut to adult dental. Another way of looking at this impact is the effect on waiting times. What is the national average waiting time for adult dental services?

Mr Cormack: The national weighted average was 12 months at 31 December 2016. That is the average waiting time for general treatment.

Senator SINGH: That is across the country?

Mr Cormack: That is the national weighted average.

Senator SINGH: So it is longer in some states than in others? I can tell you that it is longer than 12 months in Tasmania.

Mr Cormack: And shorter in others, that is right.

Senator SINGH: Do you have that breakdown?

Mr Cormack: Yes, I can give you that breakdown.

Senator SINGH: How long is it in Tasmania?

Mr Cormack: Tasmania is 9.4 months.

Senator SINGH: Not from the constituents that I have had come through my door.

Mr Cormack: That is just the advice that we have been provided by the states.

Mr Bowles: These numbers come from the states and territories, by the way. They manage this, not us.

Senator SINGH: Take on notice the list, if that is okay.

Mr Cormack: Sure.

Answer:

The states and territories provided the following information under the third performance period of the National Partnership Agreement on Adult Public Dental Services (1 July 2016 – 31 December 2016).

Average Waiting Times (Months)*	
State	As at 31 Dec 2016
NSW	14.24
VIC	16.01
QLD	9.36
WA	2.50
SA	14.71
TAS	9.40
ACT	5.95
NT	45.69
TOTAL (average)	14.73
Weighted average	12.81

* Note: states report on waiting times differently, which may create slight inconsistencies when comparing the jurisdictions.