

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Budget Estimates 2017 - 2018, 30 May 2017

Ref No: SQ17-000590

OUTCOME: 2 - Health Access and Support Services

Topic: Headspace

Type of Question: Hansard Page 17, 30 May 2017

Senator: O'Neill, Deborah

Question:

Senator O'NEILL: Can you take this on notice: has the minister ticked off on another headspace for the member for Canning, bypassing an evaluation process? Can the minister confirm that Canning was one of the 20 that was on the final list? It seems that the member for Canning might have already known something or an impending announcement. Has he been part of the process?

Senator Nash: I do not think it is fair to categorise it that way. Members in electorates right across the country are continually raising issues of importance in their electorates with ministers in the area of health, education and across a whole range of issues. It would not be unusual for a member to raise something that they thought was important in their electorate.

Senator O'NEILL: But it would be unfortunate if it were—

Senator Nash: Well—

Senator O'NEILL: The headline was 'Mandurah wins headspace', as if it was a competition between colleagues who are pushing for their favourite area over a proper response to needs on the ground.

Senator Nash: I would certainly hope that you would not want to make something as important as new headspace sites a political issue.

Senator O'NEILL: I fear it may well have become one already, Senator Nash.

Senator Nash: It is incredibly important that we get these sites out across the country, adding to what we have already done. As you know, they are really well received, and the last thing people want to see is people using headspace sites as a political football.

Senator O'NEILL: It would be really frightening to think that the precious money that needs to go to these services across a state as big as Western Australia ends up in the wrong place because of lobbying rather than through analysis.

Senator Nash: I would not be frightened pre-emptively at all. There has been a very rigorous process around this. I have undertaken, on that particular circumstance, to come back to you with the information.

Senator O'NEILL: Thank you.

Answer:

Please refer to response provided to Question on Notice SQ17-000587.