

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Budget Estimates 2017 - 2018, 30 May 2017

Ref No: SQ17-000641

OUTCOME: 2 - Health Access and Support Services

Topic: Alcohol and drug services

Type of Question: Hansard Page 50, 30 May 2017

Senator: Watt, Murray

Question:

Senator WATT: Thank you. Do you have any data about the number of people actually turned away from services in each state and territory?

Dr Studdert: We do not have that data. It goes to the similar sorts of datasets we were talking about before the break. We can certainly look at whether there are publicly available datasets that would have that.

Mr Laffan: I think it is important to make a distinction here as well that the people who do present to the wide variety of alcohol and drug services that are available are assessed and treated on the basis of clinical need, so that those people who need those services the most are able to access them.

Senator WATT: Could you take that on notice? I understand it might involve some collection of data if it is not something that you have readily to hand.

Dr Studdert: I would see if there are some other datasets that are not Commonwealth that we could point you to.

Senator WATT: Okay. Maybe you could do that.

Dr Studdert: Yes.

Answer:

The Department of Health does not have figures on the number of people unable to access treatment services in each state and territory.

The New Horizons: The review of alcohol and other drug treatment services in Australia report (2014) estimated that at that time, approximately 200,000 people received alcohol and other drug treatment annually in Australia and at least an equal number needed and would seek treatment but it was unavailable.