

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Budget Estimates 2017 - 2018, 29 & 30 May 2017

Ref No: SQ17-000703

OUTCOME: 2 - Health Access and Support Services

Topic: Nganampa Health Council

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Senator: Kakoschke-Moore, Skye

Question:

The South Australian Government's Community Cabinet visited the APY Lands at the beginning of May 2017. During that visit, the Nganampa Health Council where Gayle Woodford worked, advised it had been using special federal funding to provide escorts for nurses but they were awaiting confirmation the funding would continue.

- a) Will the funding continue?
- b) If no decision has been made, when will a decision be made?
- c) If the funding won't continue, how do you expect the service to provide the escort?
- d) Does the Department of Health fund the Nganampa Health Council?
- e) If so, does the Department consider there is a role to play to ensure the health workers are safe?

Answer:

- a) Yes. On 15 June 2017, the Department of Health executed an agreement with the Nganampa Health Council to receive an additional \$895,000 (GST exclusive) in 2017-18 to help meet the primary health care needs of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Lands.
- b) A decision has been made on the funding.
- c) Funding will continue.
- d) Yes. The funding was provided in addition to the \$32.5 million (GST exclusive) already provided to Nganampa Health Council under the Indigenous Australians' Health Programme from 2015-16 to 2017-18.
- e) It is the responsibility of employers to provide safe and secure working conditions for their staff. While the Australian Government provides funding to states and territories for remote area health services, and directly funds some service providers, the Commonwealth does not directly employ, or set working conditions, for remote area health staff employed by these health providers. Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations are required to operate under relevant state and territory legislation.

Although the Australian Government does not directly employ remote area health staff, it has invested in improving safety and security for the remote area health workforce by funding CRANaplus to develop a suite of resources to assist and guide employers, health service providers, communities, clinicians and other health workers, to establish

and maintain safe and effective working arrangements at remote health services for all health workers; one such resource is the Safety and Security Guidelines for Remote and Isolated Health, released in May 2017. These Guidelines provide examples of activities that can be implemented by employers, service providers, communities, clinicians, and other stakeholders to establish and maintain safe and effective operating systems in remote health services.