

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Budget Estimates 2017 - 2018, 29 & 30 May 2017

Ref No: SQ17-000874

OUTCOME: 1 - Health System Policy, Design and Innovation

Topic: Research Funding

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Senator: Griff, Stirling

Question:

Please clarify NHMRC's role with the Medical Research Future Fund. Is it to disburse or administer grants? Does NHMRC get any say in what is funded?

Answer:

The *Medical Research Future Fund Act 2015* (the Act) establishes the Australian Medical Research Advisory Board (AMRAB), which determines the Australian Medical Research and Innovation Strategy and Australian Medical Research and Innovation Priorities. The Act stipulates that the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) Chief Executive Officer is a member of AMRAB.

The Act also allows the Health Minister to delegate specific powers to the Chief Executive Officer, or a Senior Executive Service (SES) employee or acting SES employee of the NHMRC. This allows the Minister to benefit from the NHMRC's expertise in funding medical research and allows the NHMRC to manage distributions from the Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF) Health Special Account.

NHMRC will have a role implementing three of the programs announced as part of the first MRFF disbursements. NHMRC will administer the application and selection processes and assist with grant administration for the following measures:

- Next Generation Clinical Researchers;
- Lifting Clinical Trials and Registries Capacity; and
- Tackling Antimicrobial Resistance.

Two further measures announced in the Budget will be administered by the Department of Health using vehicles established by NHMRC:

- Rapid Applied Research Translation, which will be delivered by NHMRC-recognised Advanced Health Research and Translation Centres and Centres for Innovation in Regional Health.
- Boosting Preventive Health Research, which will be delivered by the Australian Prevention Partnership Centre, an NHMRC Partnership Centre established in 2013.