

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Budget Estimates 2017 - 2018, 29 & 30 May 2017

Ref No: SQ17-001013

OUTCOME: 2 - Health Access and Support Services

Topic: E-cigarettes

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Senator: Leyonhjelm, David

Question:

Was the Therapeutic Goods Administration accurate when it stated on 23 March 2017 with respect to e-cigarettes that “Current government policy supports the cessation of smoking rather than harm reduction”?

Answer:

The Australian Government’s policy in relation to e-cigarettes and tobacco control (including strategies and approaches to facilitate smoking cessation) is underpinned by the principles of harm minimisation. This approach encompasses the three pillars of demand reduction, supply reduction and harm reduction which apply to all drug types in various ways. The principles of harm minimisation underpin Australia’s overarching policy framework for tobacco, alcohol and other drugs, which was articulated in Australia’s National Drug Strategy (NDS) 2010-2015 and referred to in Australia’s National Tobacco Strategy (NTS) 2012-2018. The NTS 2012-2018 is a sub-strategy of the NDS 2010-2015.

In making the relevant comment the scheduling delegate intended to summarise the Australian Government policy with respect to e-cigarettes in the context of this framework. The Therapeutic Goods Administration will update its website to clarify the intent of the comment. This does not change the March 2017 final scheduling decision in relation to nicotine.