

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Budget Estimates 2017 - 2018, 29 & 30 May 2017

Ref No: SQ17-001041

OUTCOME: 2 - Health Access and Support Services

Topic: Dental

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Senator: Di Natale, Richard

Question:

Given the deep cut of over \$300 million over three years to public dental funding to the states, what are the current waiting lists state by state for public dental? Have these risen?

Answer:

Under the previous National Partnership Agreement (NPA) on Adult Public Dental Services, \$232.5 million was available over 1.5 years. Under the proposed NPA on Public Dental Services for Adults, \$242.5 million will be available over 2.5 years.

The current waiting lists state by state are as follows:

Patients on Public Dental Waiting Lists*	
State/Territory	As at 31 Dec 2016
NSW	76,580
VIC	155,499
QLD	116,902
WA	8,483
SA	38,744
TAS	8,292
ACT	1,579
NT	3,838
TOTAL	409,917

* For general treatment.

Note that each state reports differently on waiting lists, which may create slight inconsistencies when comparing the jurisdictions.

Waiting lists have risen since the first NPA on Treating More Public Dental Patients with the states (commenced 1 January 2013). However, the states have previously advised that this may be due to improvements made against waiting times, which encourages more patients to add themselves to the list, believing that they will access services sooner.