

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Budget Estimates 2017 - 2018, 29 May 2017

Ref No: SQ17-001051

OUTCOME: 2 - Health Access and Support Services

Topic: Remote Communities

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Senator: Di Natale, Richard

Question:

While we know that death rates for people living in remote Australia are high, we have little understanding of the underlying prevalence of disease for this population. What is being done to improve the quality of information about remote communities and what is the timeline to address this issue? Have negotiations been undertaken with the ABS and AIHW to improve remote data collection?

Answer:

The Department of Health and the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) jointly fund the National Health Survey (NHS) which reports every three years on long-term health conditions and health risk factors according to remoteness categories such as major cities, inner regional, and outer regional and remote Australia.

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) produces *Australia's health* every two years, which has a chapter on *Rural and remote health*, which reflects the data collected in the NHS.

The Department of Health funded the AIHW for the *Australian Burden of Disease Study: Impact and causes of illness and death in Australia, 2011* which assessed burden of disease by remoteness and disease groups. The Department of Health is providing the AIHW a further \$2 million for the *Australian Burden of Disease Study: Update of national estimates* based on the most recent 2015 data.