

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Budget Estimates 2017 - 2018, 29 & 30 May 2017

Ref No: SQ17-000892

OUTCOME: 2 - Health Access and Support Services

Topic: Primary Health Networks

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Senator: O'Neill, Deborah

Question:

PHN Mental Health Advisory Panel

The Minister announced the establishment of the PHN Advisory Panel on Mental Health on 23 March. When will the Terms of Reference, membership and exact tasks for the Panel be made public? Has any funding been allocated to the advisory panel? What will the advisory panel be tasked to do? Will the advisory panel report directly to the Minister for Health? Can the Department provide the timelines for the advisory panel and the terms of reference? What advice was given to the Government so the Minister could make the decision to establish the panel? How has the membership of the Panel been determined, and how is the Government determining the right mix of expertise and experience to provide advice to 31 PHNs with very different regional needs?

Answer:

A copy of the Terms of Reference for the Primary Health Network (PHN) Advisory Panel on Mental Health are attached at Attachment A.

The Terms of Reference are being made publicly available through the Department of Health's website, noting they have already been distributed to PHNs and Advisory Panel members.

Funding for the Advisory Panel's work program will be met from the existing mental health budget allocation.

The Minister's decision to establish the panel was made following direct consultation with the mental health sector, and departmental advice.

Membership of the Advisory Panel, including the mix of expertise, was determined through consultation between the Minister's Office, the Co-Chairs of the Advisory Panel, and the Department.