

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Supplementary Budget Estimates 2010-11, 20 October 2010

Question: E10-054

OUTCOME 1: Population Health

Topic: ALCOPOPS TAX PROGRAMS

Written Question on Notice

Senator Siewert asked:

Please report on the status of package of programs that were promised by the Government in the agreement with The Greens on the passage of the Alcopops legislation?

- a) How many projects have been funded to date?
- b) Can you provide a breakdown and description of projects funded to date?
- c) Please provide an update on progress of projects yet to commence.

Answer:

- a) No projects have been funded to date as development of the three measures in the package of programs comprising the \$50 million expansion of the National Binge Drinking Strategy is currently underway as detailed under c) below. The three measures are:
 - \$25 million for a community sponsorship fund to provide an alternative to alcohol industry sponsorship for local community sporting and cultural organisations;
 - \$20 million for community grants programs that aim to prevent and reduce binge drinking by young people; and
 - \$5 million for the enhancement of alcohol helplines.
- b) Not applicable.
- c) *Community Sponsorship Fund*

The Department of Health and Ageing has released a consultation paper on the Community Sponsorship Fund (the Fund), which was circulated to community and peak body stakeholders on 27 October 2010, with submissions requested by 19 November 2010. The Minister for Health and Ageing, the Hon Nicola Roxon MP, also wrote to all MPs and Senators advising them of the consultation and inviting comments. The consultation paper is available on the Department's www.alcohol.gov.au website.

Following the consultation period and consideration of feedback, it is expected that the Fund will be established in 2011 and applications invited from community-based sporting and cultural organisations.

Community grants program (within the Community Level Initiative)

The National Binge Drinking Strategy measures announced in 2008 included two rounds of community grants for projects to address binge drinking, and 38 projects are currently underway, totalling \$7.2 million.

An additional \$20 million has been provided for the community grants program, as part of the expansion of the National Binge Drinking Strategy announced in the 2010-11 Budget. Informed by the first two rounds of grants, the Department is finalising revised guidelines for this next grants round. The intention is to advertise the grants round nationally in 2011.

Enhancement of alcohol helplines

The aim of the \$5 million enhancement of alcohol helplines is to provide a single national telephone number that people can call to receive information, counselling, advice, and referral to appropriate alcohol and other drug services where required.

Currently, under the umbrella of the Alcohol and Drug Information Services (ADIS), each state and territory offers counselling, information and referral helplines for people with alcohol and other drug problems, or people concerned that friends or family members might have such problems. Some 21 telephone numbers exist for ADIS across Australia, which creates confusion amongst potential clients and issues for effective promotion of the service.

Options to enhance alcohol telephone counselling services are currently being considered. Initial consultations with the states and territories are underway.