

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Supplementary Budget Estimates 2010-11, 20 October

Question: E10-425

OUTCOME: 1: Population Health

Topic: MALE HEALTH AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

Hansard page: CA 94/95

Senator Xenophon asked:

- a) What were the expectations in relation to that: how did this compare to expectations, as well as details of the cost of the program (partly answered); was it above or below budget?
- b) In what form did the Department proceed in relation to this program?
- c) Why did it decide to end this program given that it seemed to be a sensible preventive health approach particularly for men's health?

Answer:

- a) The National Male Health Policy Ambassadors (the Ambassadors) were appointed to raise awareness about the importance of male health and to contribute to the consultation forums for the development of the National Male Health Policy, where they spoke on what men's health meant to them. Expectations in regard to the Ambassador Program were met with the release of the National Male Health Policy.

The Ambassadors undertook their duties on a voluntary basis and were only reimbursed for out-of-pocket expenses, including airfares, taxis, meals and accommodation. The total of reimbursements made under the 9 months of the Ambassador Program was \$18,612.

The budget for the Ambassador Program was included in the overall costs of the National Male Health Policy development. An initial \$252,000 was allocated to develop the National Male Health Policy. An additional \$70,000 was required to cover costs of additional forums, advertising and associated costs. A total of 26 forums were held with more than 1,300 people concerned with male health participating.

- b) The Ambassadors were selected from a variety of professional and community backgrounds by the Minister for Health and Ageing, the Hon Nicola Roxon MP, for their ability to relate to diverse groups of men in the community. Their role was to communicate with men and raise awareness about men's health issues and the policy development process.

- c) The Ambassadors were released from their obligations under the Ambassador Program in December 2009 after completion of the National Male Health Policy consultation forums. Under the National Male Health Policy, dissemination of information about men's health will occur through regular bulletins on specific areas of male health to inform health professionals, policy makers, key stakeholders and consumers. In addition, health promotion material targeting men at key life transition points is to be developed.