

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Supplementary Budget Estimates 2011-2012, 19 October 2011

Question: E11-244

OUTCOME 1: Population Health

Topic: NATIONAL ALCOHOL STRATEGY

Written Question on Notice

Senator Xenophon asked:

- a) Can the Department provide figures on how much has been spent on the National Alcohol Strategy 2006-2011?
- b) Have there been any studies into the effectiveness of this strategy?
- c) How effective has it been in reducing binge drinking? What data has been obtained in this regard?
- d) Are figures available in relation to how much spending has been diverted from alcohol purchases due to this strategy?

Answer:

- a) The National Alcohol Strategy is a national plan for action developed through collaboration between Australian governments, non-government and industry partners, and the broader community. It outlines priority areas for coordinated action and was endorsed by the Ministerial Council on Drug Strategy on 15 May 2006.

The responsibility for implementing the recommendations is spread across jurisdictions, and across portfolios and stakeholder groups. Since 2008, the Australian Government has committed \$103.5 million through its National Binge Drinking Strategy, including through the Australian National Preventive Health Agency, as it implements the National Binge Drinking Strategy expansion measures announced in the 2010-11 Budget.

- b) As a framework for action, the National Alcohol Strategy has not itself been evaluated. However, programs conducted under the auspices of the Strategy may be evaluated individually by relevant jurisdictions.
- c) Binge drinking is one aspect of risky drinking covered by the National Alcohol Strategy. Data on alcohol consumption and risky drinking is collected through a number of sources including the National Drug Strategy Household Survey and the Australian Health Survey. The strategy and its impact on binge drinking has not been evaluated, but as noted in response b individual components of the strategy may be evaluated by relevant jurisdictions.
- d) It is not possible to determine in dollar figures spending diverted from alcohol purchases as a result of the Strategy.