

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Supplementary Budget Estimates 2015 - 2016, 21 October 2015

Ref No: SQ15-000750

OUTCOME: 9 - Biosecurity and Emergency Response

Topic: Lyme Disease

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Senator: Madigan, John

Question:

Both Professor Baggoley and Dr. Lum have publically confirmed that many patients in Australia are sick, often becoming ill following a tick bite. Why has the government failed to notify pathology laboratories, medical colleges and doctors of the existence of a Lyme-like disease in Australia? And why has it also failed to notify doctors to treat patients with presenting with Lyme and Lyme-like illness (even with no travel history) in accordance with the best knowledge of the day while research continues?

Answer:

The Department of Health has provided information for Australian medical practitioners on its Lyme disease webpage <http://www.health.gov.au/lyme-disease>. The Chief Medical Officer, Professor Baggoley, also wrote to Australian medical practitioners about Lyme disease in 2013, 2014 and 2015. These communiqués are also on the Department's webpage.