

**Senate Community Affairs Committee**

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

**Supplementary Budget Estimates 2015 - 2016, 21 October 2015**

**Ref No:** SQ15-000771

**OUTCOME:** 9 - Biosecurity and Emergency Response

**Topic:** Lyme Disease

**Type of Question:** Written Question on Notice

**Senator:** Madigan, John

**Question:**

- a) What Department of Health policy exists that addresses treatment of patients with pathogenic (bacterial, viral & fungal) infections when the specific infection/pathogen has not been determined, and so may or may not be listed on a DoH list of pathogenic infections?
- b) Is current DoH policy designed to limit diagnosis and treatment and hence control health funding?
- c) Is current DoH policy constrained by pre-determined budget?
- d) In emergency health situations, by what process does the DoH 'find' budget to deal with the situation?

**Answer:**

The Department of Health does not have a specific policy on non-communicable diseases with unexplained nonspecific symptoms. The Department is developing a national strategic framework for chronic diseases that will move away from a disease specific approach and address a broader range of chronic diseases.

The Department does not have a policy to limit the diagnosis and treatment of disease to limit health expenditure.

In times of natural disaster or health incidents of national consequence the Minister of Health may seek an appropriation of funds from the Treasury with the approval of the Prime Minister.