

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Supplementary Budget Estimates 2015 - 2016, 21 October 2015

Ref No: SQ15-000858

OUTCOME: 11 – Ageing and Aged Care

Topic: Primary Health Networks

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Senator: Polley, Helen

Question:

Please outline how Primary Health Networks will be involved in various aspects of aged care, including being given responsibility for commissioning aged care services. When is this likely to take place? What consultations will take place prior to this? Who will be included in these consultations? Will PHNs be able to provide a representative to the Aged Care Sector Committee?

Answer:

Primary Health Networks (PHNs) have been established with the objectives of increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of medical services for patients, particularly those at risk of poor health outcomes, and improving coordination of care to ensure patients receive the right care in the right place at the right time.

The Australian Government has agreed to six key priorities for targeted work by PHNs, with aged care identified as one of these priorities.

During 2015-16, PHNs will conduct baseline needs assessments to inform their purchasing and commissioning decisions from 2016-17. Each PHN will conduct and submit their needs assessment for the region, using population health and service data, and clinical and consumer views through Clinical Councils and Community Advisory Committees. It is expected that the needs assessment will identify service gaps, health concerns, system capacity issues, and prioritise services to be funded, which may be for recipients of aged care services.

The Department of Health holds the roles of policy oversight and national support to PHNs, and as such will ensure that PHNs' views are represented at the Aged Care Sector Committee as required.