

## Senate Community Affairs Committee

### ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

#### HEALTH PORTFOLIO

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

Ref No: SQ15-000919

**OUTCOME:** 11 - Ageing and Aged Care

**Topic:** National Framework for Action on Dementia 2015-2019

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

**Senator:** Polley, Helen

**Question:**

- a) The COAG National Framework for Action on Dementia 2015-2019 was released recently with very limited fanfare or acknowledgement by Government. Can you indicate why the Department has chosen not make a public announcement about the Framework which is its only definitive policy statement on dementia in Australia? Please outline a timeframe?
- b) What consultations were held and at what time did they occur? What stakeholders were consulted in developing the final Framework?
- c) Can you further indicate why, when dementia is the second leading cause of death in Australia, the Government has chosen to develop a 'framework' that contains no outcomes measures or funding commitments consistent with a condition that exacts such a significant economic and social impact on the Australian community?
- d) Does the Department intend to develop a more robust strategy or plan that will contain forward commitments and details on activities and outcomes that more adequately reflects the level of harm caused by dementia in Australia?

**Answer:**

a) to d)

The National Framework for Action on Dementia 2015-2019 (the Framework) is not a Commonwealth document; it is a Council of Australian Governments (COAG) Health Ministers' document.

COAG Health Ministers developed the Framework over a period of 2 years from 2013 until its final endorsement in 2015. COAG Health Ministers announced their endorsement of the Framework in their Communique of 7 September 2015. The Commonwealth subsequently released it on both the Department of Social Services (DSS) and Department of Health websites.

Additionally, on 25 September 2015 the Department (DSS) sent an e-mail message about the Framework to 4,152 aged care providers and stakeholders.

The COAG clearance process involved consulting the following standing committees prior to its consideration by Health Ministers:

- Community Care and Population Health Principal Committee;

- National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Standing Committee; and
- the Australian Health Ministers' Advisory Council.

On 7 August 2015, Commonwealth, state and territory Health Ministers agreed to the Framework. This is a guiding document developed by Commonwealth, state and territory governments to create a strategic, collaborative and cost effective response to dementia across Australia. The Framework supports ongoing action in dementia care for governments, service providers, peak bodies and the broader community, to work together to create accessible, seamless pathways to care.

Government will continue to work with the sector in response to the analysis of dementia programmes.