

**Senate Community Affairs Committee**

**ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**HEALTH PORTFOLIO**

**Supplementary Budget Estimates 2016 - 2017, 19 October 2016**

**Ref No:** SQ16-000442

**OUTCOME:** 2 - Health Access and Support Services

**Topic:** Mental Health Commitments

**Type of Question:** Hansard Page 112, 19 October 2016

**Senator:** O'Neill, Deborah

**Question:**

Mr Bowles: It is new money. It was an election commitment. It is additional funding. You are now conflating something that happened at MYEFO. Since then, we have had a budget, an election and election commitments, and we are now moving on. You are conflating a whole range of different issues.

Senator SIEWERT: We can add up.

Senator O'NEILL: You might talk about conflating; we just want some clarity around what has gone where and what has been removed. The minister admitted in the parliament last week that the government's mental health commitments were based on 'effectively' new funding. As this goes on, I get more and more confused about the \$192 million. During consideration in detail yesterday, Mr Lee stated: 'There is the \$192 million that the Prime Minister allocated during the campaign because of his personal passion for suicide prevention.' So, the minister thinks the Prime Minister allocates funding.

Mr Bowles: No, that is an election commitment—we have already said that. The \$192 million is an election commitment that the government committed during the election campaign.

Senator O'NEILL: She seems to have struggled to get Treasury and Finance to agree to put money in.

Mr Bowles: No, I do not know what you are talking about there. During the election, the Prime Minister committed \$192 million to mental health.

Senator O'NEILL: Who is responsible for the mental health funding allocation? Is it to the minister or the Prime Minister?

Mr Bowles: The Prime Minister seems to sit at the top of what we are talking about here.

Senator O'NEILL: He is making this decision—it is his call. What is the make-up of the \$192 million in funding? Could you indicate what is existing, reallocated or additional.

Mr Cormack: Our advice is that this is all new money.

Mr Bowles: There is no reallocation.

Mr Cormack: We are going through the processes—just let me talk you through what they are. The \$192 million includes \$111.5 million for 10 new headspace centres, funding for 10 PHN lead sites—

Senator O'NEILL: How much for that?

Mr Cormack: I will get that figure for you in a second. There is \$46 million to help prevent suicide and reduce suicide behaviour, which includes additional funding for four PHN lead sites conducting suicide prevention trials and funding for a further eight regional lead sites;

\$32.5 million for e-mental health and other digital health services, including trialling a crisis text message service through Lifeline; and \$1.5 million to the Australian College of Mental Health Nurses to look at a workforce model. That is the \$192 million.

Senator O'NEILL: And the total of that is \$192 million?

Mr Cormack: Yes, I believe so.

Senator O'NEILL: Thank you for putting that on the record, but if you could provide the document that would also be quite helpful.

Mr Bowles: We can provide that on notice.

**Answer:**

On 26 June 2016, the Coalition announced additional funding of \$192 million to strengthen mental health care in Australia. This included:

- 10 Primary Health Network (PHN) lead sites, trialling innovative approaches in mental health services, including four sites to focus on suicide prevention;
- \$111.5 million for 10 new headspace centres and the continuation of Early Psychosis Youth Services funding;
- \$46 million to help prevent suicide and reduce suicidal behaviour. This includes additional funding for the four PHN lead sites conducting suicide prevention trials and funding for a further eight regional PHN lead sites;
- \$32.5 million to support the transformation of e-mental health and other digital services, including trialling a crisis text service;
- \$1.5 million to the Australian College of Mental Health Nurses to look at a new workforce model; and
- Strengthening the National Mental Health Commission.

Further information can be found in the media release of 26 June 2016 issued by the Prime Minister:

- <http://www.malcolmturnbull.com.au/media/the-coalitions-plan-to-strengthen-mental-health-care-across-australia>