

**Senate Community Affairs Committee**

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

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

**Ref No:** SQ16-000487

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

**Topic:** Gumeracha

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

**Senator:** Griff, Stirling

**Question:**

Given the treacherous roads and lack of access to public transport, the rural town of Gumeracha is significantly isolated. We understand that the Rural Classification Technical Working Group has identified Gumeracha Medical Practice as a potential anomaly within the MMM2 classification. Can the Government provide an update on the progress of this decision?

**Answer:**

Under the current Australian Bureau of Statistics' (ABS) population data, Gumeracha is categorised as an Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS) – Remoteness Area (RA) 2 area (ASGS-RA 2), and as it is within 20 kilometre road distance of a town, with a population greater than 50,000 (i.e. Adelaide), it receives the classification of MM 2.

Gumeracha is also classified as a District of Workforce Shortage (DWS) location, which allows doctors who are subject to restrictions under section 19AB of the *Health Insurance Act (1973)*, such as overseas trained doctors, to access Medicare benefits when working in Gumeracha under the DWS system.

The Rural Classification Technical Working Group (the Working Group) met in February 2016 to review the implementation and parameters of the Modified Monash Model (MMM). Gumeracha was among a number of specific towns discussed at this meeting. The Working Group was provided the details of issues regarding Gumeracha's classification.

The Working Group provided endorsement of the MMM as it applies to MM 2 towns, including the 20 kilometre buffer zones. The Working Group supported Gumeracha remaining as MM 2.

The MMM will next be updated and reviewed in 2018 following the ABS 2016 Census of Population and Housing.