

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Supplementary Budget Estimates 2016 - 2017, 19 October 2016

Ref No: SQ16-000521

OUTCOME: 2 - Health Access and Support Services

Topic: Mental Health Services

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Senator: Siewert, Rachel

Question:

Has the Government carried out a gaps analysis of mental health services nationally and in each PHN region?

- a) If so, please provide the outcomes.
- b) If not, why not?

Answer:

The Government tasked the National Mental Health Commission (the Commission) to undertake a review of mental health programs and services in Australia (the Review), in line with a 2013 Election Commitment. The Review identified gaps in service delivery, inefficiency, duplication and excessive red tape across government, non-government and private sectors.

The Government then undertook a targeted consultation process across the mental health sector, and drew on advice from an Expert Reference Group, to further understand the gaps in the sector and inform its comprehensive response to the Review released on 26 November 2015.

As part of the response to the Review, the Government committed to locally planned and commissioned mental health services through Primary Health Networks. To achieve this Primary Health Networks are required to undertake needs assessments within their region to identify the mental health gaps within their regions. Through this process, PHNs have worked to identify service gaps, major health concerns and system capacity issues in their communities through an analysis of population health data and stakeholder views. In August 2016, each PHN published its needs assessment on its website.