

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Supplementary Budget Estimates 2016 - 2017, 19 October 2016

Ref No: SQ16-000674

OUTCOME: 2 - Health Access and Support Services

Topic: PHN mental health lead sites

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Senator: Polley, Helen

Question:

(1) I note the Government has stated clearly in its election policy that 10 PHN mental health lead sites would start implementing a stepped care model from July 2016? Has this occurred? If yes, can you provide details? If not, why not? (2) Is the Government on track to roll out the 10 sites? Are there any delays? (3) Is there any data, analysis or assessments being carried out to identify where service gaps and needs are? (4) Will this mean that there will be a loss of services for some people? (5) Are the 10 PHN lead sites funded out of the \$192 million? If not, can the Department provide details on how the 10 PHN mental health lead sites are funded?

Answer:

- (1) Ten Primary Health Networks (PHNs) commenced as mental health lead sites in July 2016. All 31 PHNs have commenced the implementation of a stepped care model with lead sites having an additional role in demonstrating core elements of reform, leading development and modelling of innovative approaches to regional planning, integration and stepped care in primary mental health care. Learnings from lead site projects are intended to support ongoing mental health reform implementation.
- (2) Lead site work is underway noting that work relating to suicide prevention is slower to commence given the announcement of additional suicide prevention trial sites.
- (3) Lead site work is in addition to the mental health activity being undertaken by all 31 PHNs which includes a requirement to undertake evidence based regional mental health and suicide prevention planning and service mapping that identifies needs and gaps, reduces duplication, removes inefficiencies and encourages innovation.
- (4) In addition to the planning and mapping activity outlined in (3), the reforms underway require all 31 PHNs to design and implement a continuum of primary mental health services within a person-centred stepped care approach so that a range of service types are available within local regions to better match with individual and local population need.
- (5) Lead site funding of \$26 million was sourced from within the existing mental health funding allocation. Additional funding of \$7 million for the four lead sites undertaking suicide prevention activities is one component of the additional \$192 million announced as part of the election commitment to Strengthen Mental Health Care in Australia.