

**Senate Community Affairs Committee**

**ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**HEALTH PORTFOLIO**

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

**Ref No:** SQ16-000727

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

**Topic:** Kids Matter

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

**Senator:** Polley, Helen

**Question:**

Kids Matter funding runs out in December 2016 and the Department of Health is yet to release the tender for the continuation of mental health frameworks in primary schools. Can the Department confirm if funding has been extended until June 2017? Can the Department provide the timeline for the tender and the measures that will be put in place to ensure adequate stability for school planning and Kids Matter employees? When will the Government release the tender for the provision of the mental health and wellbeing operational framework for primary schools? What interim arrangements does the Government have in place to ensure the Kids Matter program will be delivered in schools at the beginning of the next school year? Has the Department of Education discussed the continuation of the Kids Matter program with the Department of Health? Has there been an evaluation of the Kids Matter program? What were the findings of the evaluation? How many schools and how many kids have been reached by the Kids Matter program? How many people are employed by the Kids Matter Program? What are the conditions under which they are employed? What is the nature of the uncertainty that will be faced by Kids Matter employees as a result of the repeated extensions and lack of funding certainty?

**Answer:**

The Minister for Health has approved an extension of funding for *beyondblue* to deliver KidsMatter to 30 June 2017.

The approach to market for the National Support for Child and Youth Mental Health Program is on track to be released in 2016.

*beyondblue* has been asked to provide a proposal to ensure there is no gap in service delivery in the lead up to the commencement of the National Support for Child and Youth Mental Health Program.

The Department of Education and Training was consulted in the design of the National Support for Child and Youth Mental Health Program due to implications for schools in its delivery.

There have been two evaluations and one review of KidsMatter since 2009.

An evaluation of its success as a national pilot in 2009 found that KidsMatter was associated with improvements in students' measured mental health.

A mid-term review of KidsMatter in 2013 found that it was operating successfully and progressing well towards delivering required outcomes.

An evaluation of the KidsMatter resources in 2015 found that they had achieved widespread reach, were comprehensive and rated highly in terms of their usefulness, relevance, ease of understanding, clarity and volume of information.

As at 14 October 2016, a total of 3,074 primary schools had been recruited as 'KidsMatter Primary Schools' since the Australian Government commenced funding the program in 2012. The Department is unable to estimate the number of children that have been reached by the program.

It is not known how many people are employed for KidsMatter and the conditions under which they are employed as the program is managed by *beyondblue*. The Department is not a party to the subcontracting arrangements for the delivery of KidsMatter.

The Department has been in regular contact with *beyondblue* since the first half of 2016 around transitioning to the National Support for Child and Youth Mental Health Program and has provided ongoing advice around transition arrangements for *beyondblue* to communicate to their stakeholders.