

**Senate Finance and Public Administration Committee**

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

**Additional Estimates 2014 - 2015, 27 February 2015**

**Ref No:** SQ15-000258

**OUTCOME:** 5 - Primary Health Care

**Topic:** National Suicide Prevention Strategy

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

**Senator:** Siewert, Rachel

**Question:**

- 1) Will the Government have in place new funding arrangements by 30 June 2015 or will the government roll over and continue funding the existing National Suicide Prevention Program and the Taking Action to Tackle Suicide Program until such time as the Government is ready to implement new arrangements for mental health programs?;
- 2) Of the \$6.1 million allocated towards Indigenous Suicide how much of that money was allocated towards clinical approaches to Indigenous Suicide and how much of that money was allocated towards culturally based approaches along the lines of those called for by the Productivity Commission in its 2014 Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage Report?
- 3) How much of that money was allocated to community based Aboriginal organisations and how much of it was allocated towards either Government agencies or to non – Indigenous NGOs?
- 4) Will the Government act on the advice of the Productivity Commission’s 2014 Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage Report in regards to funding of best practice programs like the Yiriman Project?
- 5) Is the Government committed to the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention Strategy?
- 6) Does the Government plan to honour or extend the funding arrangements for the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention Strategy?
- 7) Will the Government respond to the long history of calls for more investment in culturally based Aboriginal Social and Emotional Wellbeing programs, such as the Yiriman Youth Project?

**Answer:**

- 1) The Government is considering the Review and its recommendations. The Review will inform future decisions on mental health, including funding arrangements.
- 2) and 3)

In 2014-15, approximately \$6.1 million has been allocated through the National Suicide Prevention Programme and Taking Action to Tackle Suicide package (Supporting Communities to Reduce the Risk of Suicide component) to projects supporting Indigenous suicide prevention activity.

The vast majority of funding is targeted towards supporting culturally appropriate services and activities that are grounded in the community and based on community needs, and seeks to reduce the risk of suicide for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their communities.

- 4) The Government's future decisions on mental health and suicide prevention will be informed by the outcome of the National Mental Health Commission Review of Mental Health Programmes and Services. The Government is considering the recommendations of the report and is exploring short-term and longer-term practical strategies to address these recommendations.
- 5) Long-term strategies for the implementation of key recommendations of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention Strategy will be informed by the recommendations of the Review of Mental Health Programmes and Services undertaken by the National Mental Health Commission.
- 6) See answer to question 1) above.
- 7) See answer to question 4) above.