

Senate Select Committee on Stillbirth Research and Education

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

21 September 2018

Question no: 1

Type of Question: Written

Question:

The committee understands that the Department of Health is currently in the process of reviewing/updating the National Maternity Services Plan.

The committee is seeking the department's response to the following written questions on notice:

1. Is the Department of Health currently reviewing/updating the National Maternity Services Plan?
2. If so, can the department please outline the process for reviewing/updating the Maternity Services Plan?
3. At what stage is that process currently?
4. What will be the outcome of that process?
5. Is the department seeking input from stakeholders as part of the process?
6. When will the process conclude?

Answer:

1. The 2010-2015 National Maternity Services Plan, developed under Commonwealth leadership, concluded on 30 June 2016. In September 2017 the Australian Health Ministers Advisory Council agreed to start a new process to develop a National Strategic Approach to Maternity Services (NSAMS).
2. The Commonwealth is the lead jurisdiction for the project. A Project Reference Group (PRG) consisting of senior officials from each jurisdiction and chaired by the Commonwealth Chief Nursing and Midwifery Officer is overseeing the project. The PRG will report to Australian Health Ministers Advisory Council (AHMAC) through the Health Services Principal Committee (HSPC).
3. A draft set of Strategic Directions for the NSAMS has been developed and will be the subject of public consultations during October-November via face to face workshops, written submissions and webinars.
4. The final NSAMS is intended to provide an overarching national approach to maintaining Australia's high-quality maternity care system and working towards further improvements in line with contemporary practice, research and international developments.
5. Yes. An Advisory Group (AG) comprised of obstetricians, midwives, general practitioners, academics and consumers from both the public and private sector has been providing expertise to the project. During May- June 2018 public consultations were

undertaken to inform the development of the NSAMS. These included stakeholder consultation workshops and focus groups in capital cities and regional locations, written submissions and stakeholder meetings. Further public consultation will occur in October – November 2018 as noted in point 3 above.

6. NSAMS has an anticipated completion date of no later than July 2019.