

Private Briefing – 16 September 2020
ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Department of Social Services

Topic: Joint Select Committee on Implementation of the National Redress Scheme - Question 13

Question reference number: SQ20-000617

Member: Sharon Claydon

Type of Question: Spoken. Hansard Page/s: 10

Date set by the Committee for the return of answer: 15 October 2020

Question:

Ms CLAYDON: I just wanted to follow up on why the government decided to send our committee's recommendations from the first interim report to the independent reviewer for consideration. Could you speak to that?

Ms McGuirk: That was a decision made by the ministers redress board. Obviously that was a decision of ministers, but perhaps I could speak briefly about the context. A lot of the recommendations made by this committee went to scheme design and legislation. So, the ministers redress board felt that it was appropriate that they be considered in the context of the review, which is looking at all those issues. Obviously we're trying to implement those recommendations that could be actioned by adjusting services or service strategies, where that is possible. That was the discussion and the agreement between state and territory ministers and the Commonwealth minister.

Ms CLAYDON: I'm not sure whether or not this is a question for you, but I am interested in which kind of recommendations are attempting to be actioned now, as opposed to ones that have just been passed on.

Ms McGuirk: We can certainly provide that on notice, maybe a table with your recommendations and what's occurred.

Ms CLAYDON: Yes. I'm interested in a bit of a status report on where those recommendations are.

Answer:

The department has undertaken a number of activities consistent with the themes of the first interim report.

This includes:

- In the lead-up to the 30 June 2020 deadline for institutions to join the National Redress Scheme (the Scheme), the department worked with and encouraged non-participating institutions to join the Scheme and secured commitments from 158 institutions to join the Scheme by the revised 31 December 2020 deadline. Whilst no institutions were listed as declining to join the Scheme at the 31 December 2020 deadline, 11 institutions cannot currently meet the legislative requirements of the Scheme and unable to join at this time.
- Supporting the recruitment of Ms Robyn Kruk AO to the role of reviewer of the legislated second anniversary review of the Scheme.
- Coordinating requests for information on behalf of Ms Kruk and providing relevant briefing on all elements of the Scheme to support Ms Kruk undertake her role.
- Providing an additional \$104.6 million across four years in the 2020-21 Budget to continually improve the Scheme for survivors.