



PARLIAMENT of AUSTRALIA

MEDIA RELEASE

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STANDING COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, AGED CARE AND SPORT
Inquiry into the 2017-18 Annual Reports of the Department of Health and Australian Hearing

Thursday, 4 April 2019

Review of Hearing Health: Report Presented to Parliament

The House of Representatives Standing Committee on Health, Aged Care and Sport today presented its *Report on the Inquiry into the 2017-18 Annual Reports of the Department of Health and Australian Hearing*. The inquiry focused on hearing services, and investigated recent developments in government hearing health policy.

The Committee Chair, Mr Trent Zimmerman MP, stated that 'the Committee was pleased that some of the findings and recommendations made in its 2017 Hearing Health Report have been actioned by the government, including an enhanced focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander hearing health, the national rollout of an online hearing screening program for children, and the development of a *Roadmap for Hearing Health*.

Despite these positive steps, the Committee received evidence from hearing health stakeholders that there is more to be done. In response, the Committee has reiterated a number of the recommendations from the 2017 Hearing Health Report, and outlined an additional six recommendations,' Mr Zimmerman said.

As well as reiterating many recommendations from the Hearing Health Report, the Committee recommended that:

- Australian Hearing remain the sole provider of audiology services for children under six years of age, and that the government announce the service arrangements (as soon as possible) that will follow the full National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) rollout;
- The *Sound Scouts* online hearing screening assessment program be made mandatory for children in their first year of school;
- The Government develop and announce plans for the Community Service Obligations program following the full rollout of the NDIS;
- The Department of Health consider developing a pilot hearing screening program for adults accessing aged care services;
- Research be commissioned into balance disorders; and
- The development of clear timelines, responsibilities, and funding for the *Roadmap for Hearing Health*.

The report is available on the Committee's [website](#).

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Background: House of Representatives Standing Committee on Health, Aged Care and Sport, (02) 6277 4145, health.reps@aph.gov.au, <http://www.aph.gov.au/health>