

**Senate Community Affairs Committee**

**ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**HEALTH PORTFOLIO**

**Additional Estimates 2016 - 2017, 1 March 2017**

**Ref No:** SQ17-000076

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

**Topic:** Ice Taskforce

**Type of Question:** Hansard Page 112

**Senator:** Di Natale, Richard

**Question:**

Senator DI NATALE: Can I ask you about the Ice Taskforce and the \$300 million commitment. I think \$240 million was provided to the Primary Health Networks. Can I just confirm: is that new money?

Dr Southern: Yes, it was new money.

Senator DI NATALE: That is not money that is coming from other existing programs? This is new money?

Dr Southern: Sorry. The bulk of it was new money for the program but was offset within Health, except for the quantum of funds that relate specifically to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander—

Senator DI NATALE: How can new money be offset?

Mr Bowles: That is how a budget works. That is how it has worked for a long period of time.

Senator DI NATALE: Where has it been offset from?

Mr Bowles: From the broader health budget. Every year we will make savings in different areas and that will be used to offset against additional expenditure.

Senator DI NATALE: Has it come from any other drug and alcohol services?

Mr Bowles: The answer to that is no.

Senator DI NATALE: It has not come from NGO programs, flexible funds—

Mr Bowles: The broader part of the health portfolio.

Senator DI NATALE: But those are within the health portfolio?

Mr Bowles: Yes.

Senator DI NATALE: Absolutely not within any of those other areas?

Mr Bowles: No to my knowledge. The way the budgeting works is that we will look at what savings are—

Senator DI NATALE: Sure, we have the MBS freeze et cetera.

Mr Bowles: —going to be achieved, and all those sorts of things.

Senator DI NATALE: But no money has been taken from existing programs?

Mr Bowles: I would have to take that on notice to be absolutely clear, but I am not aware of any money coming out of drug and alcohol type programs to put back into drug and alcohol type programs.

**Answer:**

Under the National Ice Action Strategy (NIAS), the Commonwealth is providing \$298.2 million over four years from 1 July 2016 towards a number of measures to support drug and alcohol harm reduction initiatives.

Funding for initiatives under the NIAS was not redirected from existing drug and alcohol programs.