

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Additional Estimates 2016 - 2017, 1 March 2017

Ref No: SQ17-000122

OUTCOME: 2 - Health Access and Support Services

Topic: Mental Health

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Senator: Roberts, Malcolm

Question:

Can you explain the marked increase in Suicides from 2014 with approx. 2300 to 2015 with approx. 3000 given the trend over the last decade. Can you attribute the increase to an ineffective implementation of the named changes?

Answer:

In 2015 there were 3,027 deaths registered in Australia that were recorded as suicides. This is 5.7%, or 163 deaths, higher than the 2,864 deaths recorded the previous year, 2014.

The number of suicide deaths in Australia has been trending upward over the last decade. However, the patterns of suicide deaths across sexes, age groups, states and territories, and the methods used remain very similar to that reported in previous years.

The data appear to reflect a real, significant and continuing increase in the prevalence of suicide. It is unclear why there is an increase, as a wide variety of factors may contribute to the increase in suicide deaths.