

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Additional Estimates 2016 - 2017, 1 March 2017

Ref No: SQ17-000124

OUTCOME: 2 - Health Access and Support Services

Topic: Mental Health

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Senator: Roberts, Malcolm

Question:

The rate of suicide is twice that of the national road toll average and in some instances it is six times more as is the case in the Northern Territory. It costs the Australian Economy billions of dollars per year and has been identified as the leading cause of death in amongst Australians aged 15-44. Is there any plan to effectively respond to this crisis or can we assume that legislation of voluntary euthanasia is the government solution?

Answer:

Central to the Australian Government's mental health reforms is planning, integrating and commissioning of services at a regional level. The Government provides funding to Primary Health Networks (PHNs) to lead mental health and suicide prevention planning at a regional level. Through a new flexible primary mental health care funding pool, PHNs will commission services for people with or at risk of mental illness and/or suicide.

In addition, the Australian Government has committed \$192 million over four years to strengthen mental health care in Australia, with a focus on new models of mental health care, as well as better support for young people and those at risk of suicide. This commitment includes \$34 million over three years to fund the implementation and evaluation of 12 suicide prevention trial sites and \$12 million in funding over four years for a Suicide Prevention Research Fund.