

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Additional Estimates 2016 - 2017, 1 March 2017

Ref No: SQ17-000346

OUTCOME: 2 - Health Access and Support Services

Topic: Alcohol and other Drugs

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Senator: Di Natale, Richard

Question:

Can you provide an update on the National Ice Action Strategy, particularly how the reported allocation of \$300 million is being allocated to rehabilitation and treatment services?

Answer

The Australian Government is providing \$298.2 million over four years from 1 July 2016 towards a number of measures to reduce the impacts associated with drug and alcohol misuse to individuals, families and communities.

This funding will strengthen education, prevention, treatment, support and community engagement and includes:

- \$241.5 million in funding for Primary Health Networks (PHNs) to commission further drug and alcohol treatment services to meet local need— with a focus on culturally appropriate mainstream services and services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people;
- \$24.9 million to support communities to deliver locally-based and tailored ice prevention and education activities;
- \$13 million to introduce new Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) items for Addiction Medicine Specialists from 1 November 2016;
- \$10.7 million to support clinical research into new treatment options, training of professionals and evaluating the effectiveness of clinical care for those using methamphetamines, which includes a new Centre of Clinical Excellence for Emerging Drugs of Concern; and
- \$8.1 million to more broadly improve our data sources on emerging trends in ice and other illicit drug use patterns, treatment options and early identification of newly emerging drug threats.

Funding to PHNs is broader than commissioning drug and alcohol treatment services. All PHNs have made significant progress to ensure that commissioned services improve regional health integration and coordination to provide the foundation for a sustainable drug and alcohol treatment system into the future.

PHNs can use funding under the National Ice Action Strategy to commission a range of treatment options including the following types of evidence based drug and alcohol treatment services:

- Early intervention targeting less problematic drug use, including Brief Intervention;
- Counselling;
- Withdrawal Management with pathways to post-acute withdrawal support and relapse prevention;
- Residential Rehabilitation with pathways to post-acute withdrawal support and relapse prevention;
- Day Stay rehabilitation and other intensive non-residential programme.

The breakdown of funding allocation and progress on committing these funds is outlined below.

Priority / Measure	New Funding Announced \$m	New Funding Committed \$m
1. Empower Local Communities and More Support for Families	24.9	24.9
• Establish a new online portal of information (www.positivechoices.org.au).	1.1	1.1
• Fund up to 220 new Local Drug Action Teams	19.2	19.2
• Support to more than 1,200 community sporting clubs to deliver prevention messages about ice.	4.6	4.6
• Deliver online resources to support families and carers of those using ice and other drugs.	-	-
2. Target Prevention and Education to Those Most at Risk.	-	-
• Develop new evidence-based, targeted communication activities through the National Drugs Campaign	-	-
• Enhance school education programs to include ice-related information. ('Cracks in the Ice' Toolkit)	-	-
3. Further investment in treatment and workforce support	254.5	254.5
• Primary Health Networks to commission treatment services to meet local needs	241.5	241.5
• New MBS items for Addiction Medicine Specialists	13.0	13.0
4. Focused law enforcement <i>Update cannot be provided by Health</i>	-	-
5. Better research, evidence and guidelines	18.8	15.32
• Establish a Centre of Clinical Excellence for Emerging Drugs of Concern	8.8	8.8
• Expand early intervention and online counselling, support and information (ASSIST – BI tool)	1.7	1.7
• Develop evidence-based guidelines to support frontline workers to respond to ice and expanding training to better support doctors, nurses and other health and community workers to provide screening and brief interventions.	0.2	*
• Increase the quality of population data on illicit drugs.	-	-
• Improve our data and expanding data collections to better understand our demand for alcohol and drug treatment and trends	8.1	4.82*
TOTAL	298.2	294.7

*The remaining projects are expected to be contracted before the end of the year.