

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Budget Estimates 2015 - 2016, 1 – 2 June 2015

Ref No: SQ15-000578

OUTCOME: 5 - Primary Health Care

Topic: Primary Health Networks

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Senator: Siewert, Rachel

Question:

Will the PHN Governance mechanisms include a mandatory place for an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representative? How will the Department ensure that Aboriginal knowledge and expertise from communities is reflected on the Governance Councils?

Answer:

Membership of Primary Health Network (PHN) governance arrangements will not be mandated. PHN Boards will be skills-based and managers and staff will be appropriately qualified and experienced.

PHNs are expected to establish and maintain GP-led Clinical Councils that will report on clinical issues to influence PHN Board decisions on the unique needs of their respective communities, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Community Advisory Committees will provide the community perspective to PHN Boards to ensure that decisions, investments, and innovations are patient centred, cost-effective, locally relevant and aligned to local care experiences and expectations.

While GP-led, it is expected that Clinical Councils will comprise other health professionals, including but not limited to nurses, allied and community health, Aboriginal health workers, specialists and hospital representatives. PHNs will be expected to ensure that Community Advisory Committee members have the necessary skills to participate in a committee environment and are representative of the PHN.