

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Supplementary Budget Estimates 2012-2013, 17 and 19 October 2012

Question: E12-073

OUTCOME 11: Mental Health

Topic: INTERPRETERS

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Number of pages: 2

Senator: Senator Wright

Question:

- a) Does the Commonwealth government fund interpreters for mental health consumers for whom English is a second language?
- b) If so, what is the annual cost to the Commonwealth of funding interpreters for mental health consumers for whom English is a second language?
- c) Please list the programs and initiatives that receive this funding.

Answer:

a) and c)

The Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) National provides interpreting services on a fee-for-service basis to people who do not speak English and for the English speakers who need to communicate with them.

The Australian Government, through TIS National, provides free interpreting services to non-English speaking Australian citizens and permanent residents communicating with the following approved groups and individuals:

- private medical practitioners and medical specialists providing services under Medicare;
- non-profit, non-government, community-based organisations providing settlement services and casework (subject to their funding arrangements);
- Members of Parliament for constituency purposes;
- local government authorities;
- trade unions;
- Emergency Management Australia; and
- Pharmacies in private practice for the purpose of dispensing PBS medications.

TIS National is funded through the Department of Immigration and Citizenship.

The Department of Health and Ageing provides funding for a range of mental health programs and initiatives including the Program of Assistance for the Survivors of Torture and Trauma, the Support for Day to Day Living in the Community and the Access to Allied Psychological Services programs, headspace and projects funded under the National Suicide Prevention Program.

If a provider of one of these programs/initiatives determines that an interpreter is required, program funds can be used for this purpose.

A range of popular mental health brochures have also been translated into various community languages for access by consumers and carers.

b) This detail is not available.