

**Senate Community Affairs Committee**

**ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO**

**Supplementary Budget Estimates 2012-2013, 17 & 19 October 2012**

**Question: E12-217**

**OUTCOME 10:** Health Systems, Capacity and Quality

**Topic:** ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE STANDING COMMITTEE

**Type of Question:** Written Question on Notice

**Number of pages:** 2

**Senator:** Senator Di Natale

**Question:**

Please summarise the work of the Antimicrobial Resistance Standing Committee to date including:

- How often the Committee has met and for what duration;
- Progress in each of the following areas specifically:
  - a comprehensive national AMR and usage surveillance system
  - education and stewardship programs
  - infection prevention and control guidelines
  - research into AMR and its prevention
  - a review of the current regulatory system applying to antimicrobials, and
  - community and consumer campaigns.

**Answer:**

To date the Committee has held two formal 10am to 4pm face to face meetings on 20 July 2012 and 31 October 2012.

The Committee's Operational Guidelines (endorsed by Australian Health Protection Principal Committee) set out that the Committee will meet not less than two times a year, in person. Meetings will be held at locations agreed to by members. Teleconferences and additional face to face meetings may also be held as required.

A report is currently being drafted which will provide options for models for a comprehensive national antimicrobial resistance and usage surveillance system for the Australian context. The Surveillance and Reporting of Antimicrobial Resistance and Antibiotic Usage in Australia: A National Study (AMRAU) project commenced in July 2012 and is on target to be finalised by January 2012. The report will provide an evidence base for the formation of the Committee's work plan.

The Committee formed in mid 2012. The Committee's first priority is the establishment of the Surveillance and Reporting of Antimicrobial Resistance and Antibiotic Usage in Australia: A National Study (AMRAU) report which will provide an evidence base for the Committee's work plan and activities. It is anticipated that the Committee will have a high-level national coordinating role in the area of:

- education and stewardship programs;
- infection prevention control programs;
- research;
- reviewing the current regulatory system; and
- community and consumer campaigns.

National work in hospitals has already been progressed in this area by the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care with the publication of Antimicrobial Stewardship in Australian Hospitals, and as a component of Standard 3: Preventing and Controlling Healthcare Associated Infections of the National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards which form the basis for mandatory accreditation of hospital, day surgery and dental practices from January 2013. National work in the community and for general practitioners has been commenced by NPS: Medicinewise which includes tools for health professionals and consumer campaign. A joint project by these organisations has been the development of three (3) education modules on the appropriate prudent use of antibiotics for beginning prescribers.

NPS: Medicinewise has launched the Resistance Fighter's community education campaign including the following:

- Taking antibiotics on time, every time can be hard to remember - antibiotics reminder iPhone app.
- Why some people do need antibiotics? brochure.
- antibiotic resistance in MedicinesTalk.
- Watch Dr Rowley Richards talks about his experience with antibiotics as a GP and POW during World War II and more about antibiotic resistance on NPS: Medicinewise's YouTube channel.