

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

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

Question: E12-352

OUTCOME 1: Population Health

Topic: ALCOHOL - CONSUMPTION INDICATORS

Type of Question: Hansard Page 52, 17 October 2012

Number of pages: 1

Senator: Senator Di Natale

Question:

- a) What I am asking is: have you got any clear advice from alcohol researchers or academics that would indicate that this is not an appropriate indicator?
- b) Can I ask you: who in particular specifically has provided you advice that it is not an appropriate indicator to use?
- c) I am not aware of any international debate which is why I am keen for you to perhaps provide me with any information.

Answer:

- a) The National Chronic Disease Alliance provided advice to the department regarding the targets and indicators that per capita consumption is an indicator of harmful consumption which should be considered in the context of the Global Framework.
- b) The Department of Health and Ageing's input to discussions has also been informed by a range of international research and discussions with other countries on what might be the most appropriate and practical indicators and/or targets for measuring harmful consumption of alcohol in relation to the national context of individual countries. The Department has in particular been informed by WHO publications and research, including the 2012 report 'Alcohol in the European Union: consumption, harm and policy approaches'¹, and the Global Strategy to Reduce the Harmful use of Alcohol².
- c) There are a range of views among different countries about the most appropriate indicators to measure harmful use of alcohol. In this respect the World Health Organization meeting of Member States on 5-7 November 2012 agreed that there would be a voluntary target of at least a 10 per cent relative reduction in the harmful use of alcohol as appropriate, within the national context, as well as a choice of additional alcohol indicators of harmful use as appropriate to the national context and in line with the WHO Global Strategy to Reduce the Harmful Use of Alcohol. The meeting also agreed that these indicators may include heavy episodic drinking, total alcohol per capita consumption and alcohol related morbidity and mortality among others.

1 http://www.euro.who.int/_data/assets/pdf_file/000

2 http://www.who.int/substance_abuse/alcstratenglishfinal.pdf