

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Supplementary Budget Estimates 2013-14, 20 November 2013

Question: E13-019

OUTCOME: 6 - Rural Health

Topic: Rural Health Funding

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Senator: Ludwig

Question:

- a) Is funding available to support the provision of specialist medical treatment and allied services in rural and remote areas?
- b) If so, which practice areas receive funding?

Answer:

- a) The Government provides funding to support specialist medical treatment in rural and remote areas through a number of programs:
 - The Specialist Training Program (STP) extends vocational training for specialist registrars into settings outside metropolitan teaching hospitals. In 2014 there will be 900 funded STP posts with approximately 50 per cent located in, or have a training component in, a regional or remote area.
 - The Rural Obstetric and Anaesthetic Locum Scheme (ROALS) supplies locum relief to rural obstetricians and anaesthetists. The ROALS provides for up to 14 days of subsidised locum relief per host, per financial year plus locum travel costs and is administered by the Royal Australian and New Zealand College and Gynaecologists.
 - The Rural Health Outreach Fund (RHOF) provides \$101.792 million over three years from 2013-14 to provide health services for people living in regional and remote areas, and \$92.462 million over three years from 2013-14 through the Medical Outreach – Indigenous Chronic Disease Program (MOICDP) to provide health services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in all areas of Australia, including regional and rural locations.
 - The Nursing and Allied Health Scholarship Support Scheme (NAHSSS) awards allied health scholarships for undergraduate and postgraduate studies, continuing professional development, and clinical placements supporting health professionals and future health professionals to train and practise in geographic and clinical areas of need classified as RA 2-5.
 - The Nursing and Allied Health Rural Locum Scheme (NAHRLS) provides locum relief for up to 14 days to enable allied health workers in rural areas to take leave, and enabling organisations to back-fill their positions. The NAHRLS provides a locum allowance of \$420 per day for a maximum of 14 days per annum per placement. This allowance includes funding for accommodation, work incentive and meal allowance.

b)

- The STP is available to all locations within Australia, with priority placed on participants located in ASGC-RA 2-5.
- Eligible participants for the ROALS must be located in ASGC-RA 2-5.
- The RHOF provides health services for people living in areas classified as ASGC-RA 2-5.
- The MOICDP is available for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in all areas of Australia, including regional and rural locations
- The NAHSSS is available in areas classified as ASGC-RA 2-5.
- NAHRLS is provided to areas classified as ASGC-RA 2-5.