

**Senate Community Affairs Committee**

**ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**HEALTH PORTFOLIO**

**Supplementary Budget Estimates 2014 - 2015, 22 October 2014**

**Ref No:** SQ14-001146

**OUTCOME:** 1 - Population Health

**Topic:** Antimicrobial Resistance

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

**Senator:** Di Natale, Richard

**Question:**

- a) How regularly is the antimicrobial resistance plan updated?
- b) How does the Government measure antibiotic use in the community?
- c) It was reported in the Lancet that the rate of increase of antibiotics in Australia is amongst the highest in the world – what is the actual rate of increase?
- d) What has been achieved by the Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care in regards to AMR's over the past 18 months?
- e) What happens after the 3 year program is completed and how will Australia progress in terms of surveillance programs after that.

**Answer:**

a) to e)

The Australian Government has committed to the development of a One Health National Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) Strategy to prevent and contain AMR across all sectors where antimicrobials are used. It is expected that the Strategy will be available in early 2015.

Surveillance is one of the key elements of the Strategy. Comprehensive data on AMR and antibiotic usage will identify what and where the problems are and enable interventions to be appropriately targeted, monitored and evaluated.

The Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care (the Commission) is leading the work to develop and implement enhanced surveillance arrangements. This will include the establishment of passive and targeted surveillance for AMR and antibiotic usage that builds on existing systems; and a national alert system to inform clinicians and policy-makers about emerging AMR trends that could adversely impact public health. The Commission recently completed:

- a preliminary report on AMR and antibiotic usage data in the public and private health care sectors; and
- a scoping study on AMR and antibiotic usage surveillance systems, including laboratory and pharmacy systems and surveillance reporting systems. This study will inform the development of enhanced surveillance arrangements.

Funding of Australia's AMR and antibiotic usage surveillance arrangements beyond 2015-16 is a matter for future budget consideration.