

**Senate Community Affairs Committee**

**ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**HEALTH PORTFOLIO**

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

**Ref No:** SQ14-001367

**OUTCOME:** 1 - Population Health

**Topic:** Medical Research Future Fund

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

**Senator:** Carr, Kim

**Question:**

In May 2014 the Government announced the creation of a Medical Research Future Fund of up to \$20 billion and has stated that by increasing investment in research, the Fund will help tackle cancer and other diseases.

- a) How will the Government ensure that medical discoveries are translated into improved treatment outcomes for Australian cancer patients?
- b) What mechanisms are being created to improve outcomes for Australian cancer patients in the interim?

**Answer:**

- a) The Australian Government has been translating research evidence into practice for decades and has a range of programmes based on improving outcomes based on best available evidence. For example, Cancer Australia was established in 2006 and has been operating the \$48 million priority-driven Collaborative Cancer Research Scheme since 2007.

The National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) aims to accelerate the transfer of research into policy and practice through targeted funding schemes as well as issuing guidelines and advice to the public and practitioners.

- b) A range of existing Australian Government programmes operate to improve outcomes for Australian cancer patients, including:
  - cancer research through the NHMRC (which has funded almost \$1.4 billion of cancer research in the decade since 2003);
  - development and promulgation of standards and guidelines;
  - programmes to facilitate treatment for common cancers, e.g. breast care and prostate cancer nurses; and
  - building and/or supporting treatment centres.