

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Supplementary Budget Estimates 2014 - 2015, 22 October 2014

Ref No: SQ14-001368

OUTCOME: 5 - Primary Health Care

Topic: Helping Indigenous People Self Manage their Risk of Chronic Disease

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Senator: McLucas, Jan

Question:

- a) What programs are currently available to help Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders living with chronic diseases to manage their health conditions and slow disease progression?
- b) How much funding has been provided to specifically address self-help measures?

Answer:

- a) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have access to a range of services to help them manage chronic health conditions:
 - Care Coordination and Supplementary Services - care coordination and a range of supports are provided to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who have complex chronic disease care needs;
 - Medical Outreach – Indigenous Chronic Disease - outreach services are provided to improve access to multidisciplinary comprehensive care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who experience chronic disease in urban, regional and remote locations; and
 - The Remote Area Aboriginal Health Services Programme - this Programme involves special arrangements under the provisions of section 100 of the *National Health Act 1953* for the supply of Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme medicines to eligible remote area Aboriginal Health Services (AHSs). Under these arrangements, clients of approved AHSs are able to receive medicines directly from the AHS at the point of their health consultation, without the need for a normal prescription from a GP and without charge.

In addition, there are Medicare Benefit Schedule (MBS) items which can be used to provide services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to support them to manage chronic disease:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Assessment - these are provided to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and include an assessment of their physical, psychological and social wellbeing. In 2013-14, 150,354 services were provided;

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Assessment Follow up Services - these are provided to eligible Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who have had a health assessment. In 2013-14, a total of 25,154 services were provided; and
 - Chronic Disease Management Medicare Items - these items can be used to treat all Australians. Data are weighted using Australian Institute of Health and Welfare methodology to determine the use of these items by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The weighted estimate for 2012-13 was 319,630 services (2013-14 data are not yet available).
- b) Funding for programmes that support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to self-manage chronic disease has been provided as follows:
- Funding of \$113 million (GST exclusive) was provided for Care Coordination and Supplementary Services for the period 1 July 2011 to 31 October 2014;
 - Funding of \$88 million (GST exclusive) was provided for Medical Outreach – Indigenous Chronic Disease for the period 1 July 2011 to 31 October 2014; and
 - Funding through MBS items as listed above.