

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Supplementary Budget Estimates 2015 - 2016, 21 October 2015

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OUTCOME: 5 - Primary Health Care

Topic: Mental Health

Type of Question: Hansard Page 60, 21 October 2015

Senator: Siewert, Rachel

Question:

Mr Butt: The various jurisdictions have been working fairly closely with us through a steering group that we had which then related back to the safety and quality standing committee of AHMAC. There was quite a cooperative approach, particularly in relation to seclusion. Seclusion rates have quite a cooperative approach in relation to public reporting on regional variations and the variation between states, and the rates have come down quite markedly over the past few years. I think they have gone down from 13 events per thousand bed days in 2008 to eight events per thousand in 2012. So there is good cooperation there. I think public reporting has been quite useful in that area as well. Of course there is great regional variation within states in terms of that seclusion area.

Restraint is a much harder issue and quite an emotive issue. Part of our work program going forward is to continue to work with them on how you define restraint and then what measures can be put in place to measure levels of restraint. Our focus of course in that position statement that you are talking about was within a few psychiatric units. It was not about seclusion per se, because there are obviously broader issues of seclusion which occur potentially in residential aged-care facilities and a whole range of other areas.

Senator SIEWERT: We are trying to get a handle on that as well. Have you had a look at the voluntary code that WA has? Is there any consideration about whether you think that particular approach is adequate?

Mr Butt: I have not had a look at it.

Senator SIEWERT: I meant the commission.

Mr Butt: I am not aware. I would have to take that on notice.

Senator SIEWERT: If you could take it on notice, that would great.

Mr Butt: Sure.

Answer:

The National Mental Health Commission facilitates an Expert Reference Group on seclusion and restraint. This group brings together representatives of jurisdictions among others, to share information about their initiatives to reduce and where possible eliminate seclusion and restraint and determine future action.