Supplementary Budget Estimates 2016 - 2017, 19 October 2016

Ref No: SQ16-000527

OUTCOME: 2 - Health Access and Support Services

Topic: Mental Health Nursing Services

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Senator: Siewert, Rachel

Question:

Given its unique funding model in comparison to other primary mental health programs (an incentive program vs services delivered from funding via the MBS), what education and support has the Department provided the PHNs to assist them throughout the transition of the MHNIP?

Answer:

The Department has recognised that PHNs have required information, guidance and support to implement the transition of primary mental health programs, including MHNIP. Specific supports provided to PHNs include:

- Overarching guidelines and the Schedule *PHN Program: Primary Mental Health Care Funding Agreement* provides the framework for primary mental health care services to be delivered by PHNs;
- Historical service delivery data;
- PHN Guidance materials covering a range of topics including stepped care, child and youth, low intensity services, psychological therapies for underserviced groups, severe and complex services including a focus on mental health nursing services, suicide prevention, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander services. These materials set out the Department's expectations regarding service delivery across the key priority areas and are available on the PHN website: www.health.gov.au/phn;
- Regular PHN CEO teleconferences and the National Forum which provides regular opportunities to raise and discuss issues;
- Direct and ongoing engagement with PHNs via teleconferences and face-to-face; and
- Commissioning the Australian College of Mental Health Nurses (ACMHN) to produce additional guidance, *Mental Health Nursing Services in Australia: A How to Guide for Primary Health Networks*, which is currently being made available to PHNs through both the ACMHN and PHN Health websites.