

**Senate Community Affairs Committee**

**ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**HEALTH PORTFOLIO**

**Supplementary Budget Estimates 2016 - 2017, 19 October 2016**

**Ref No:** SQ16-000596

**OUTCOME:** 1 - Health System Policy, Design and Innovation

**Topic:** Data Collection

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

**Senator:** Di Natale, Richard

**Question:**

- a) Does the department collect relevant health data on culturally and linguistically diverse populations?
- b) If not, why not?
- c) How can the government plan and meet the health needs of culturally diverse populations if this information is not collected?

**Answer:**

- a) Collection of data on culturally and linguistically diverse populations is typically captured under the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) reporting framework.
- b) The Department of Health primarily collects administrative data for the purposes of monitoring and reporting on health service and program delivery and funding. Such datasets cover the Medicare Benefits Scheme, Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme, hospitals, as well as a broad range of other datasets such as population health screening programs.
- c) To support informed decisions on health policy and programs, the Department brings together available data from a wide range of sources including from the ABS for population and socio-economic data, and the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) for health data about specific population groups (e.g. older Australians, Indigenous populations, young Australians etc.), for example:
  - socio-economic and demographic data from the 2011 Census of Population and Housing; and
  - data from the AIHW's National Aged Care Data Clearinghouse on people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds in aged care.

This approach enhances the Department's understanding of Australians' interactions with the health system and provides more detail on population groups, including culturally and linguistically diverse populations, that is not available from the administrative datasets that the Department is authorised to collect.