

**Senate Community Affairs Committee**

**ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**HEALTH PORTFOLIO**

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

**Ref No:** SQ16-000664

**OUTCOME:** 2 - Health Access and Support Services

**Topic:** Rural Health Commissioner

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

**Senator:** Watt, Murray

**Question:**

- a) When will the Rural Health Commissioner be appointed?
- b) Has the Government decided on a model for the Commissioner?
- c) What skills will the Commissioner be expected to have?
- d) Will the Commissioner be just a single person in the Health Department or the head of an agency?
- e) Will the Commissioner have any staff?
- f) What powers will the Commissioner have?
- g) What funding will be provided to the Commissioner to carry out their role?

**Answer:**

- a) The National Rural Health Commissioner (the Commissioner) will be appointed following the passage of legislation to establish the role.
- b) The Commissioner will be established as a statutory office holder.
- c) Terms of Reference for the role of the Commissioner are being developed, including the requisite skills for the position. In consultation with rural, regional and remote communities, the health sector, universities, specialist training colleges and across all levels of government the Commissioner will work to improve rural health policies and champion the cause of rural practice.
- d) See part b) above.
- e) The Commissioner is likely to be supported by staff from the Department of Health.
- f) Any powers of the Commissioner will be identified through the passage of legislation pertaining to the role.
- g) Funding for the Commissioner will be considered by the Australian Government as part of the 2016 Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook process.