

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Supplementary Budget Estimates 2016 - 2017, 19 October 2016

Ref No: SQ16-000750

OUTCOME: 2 - Health Access and Support Services

Topic: Mental Health Unit

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Senator: Polley, Helen

Question:

Can the Department provide the following information: Is there a dedicated mental health unit/branch within the Department of Health? How many Departmental staff are responsible for mental health policy? In relation to mental health policy, what is the current staffing hierarchy, including salary/wages levels? Since 2013 has there been any changes in the number of departmental staff responsible for mental health policy? If yes, please provide the staffing numbers for 2013, 2014, 2015 and 2016.

Answer:

There are two dedicated branches in the Health Services Division of the Department of Health responsible for mental health issues: Mental Health Services Branch and Mental Health Early Intervention Branch. There are also staff in the Department's Health State Network and Health Systems Policy Division that contribute to mental health policy development and program delivery as well as other health policies and programs.

As at 30 June 2016 there were 63.9 ASL in Mental Health Services and Mental Health Early Intervention branches working on mental health policy and programs. The staffing profile in these branches ranges from APS4 to SES Band 1. Salary levels are outlined in the Department of Health's Enterprise Agreement that is available on the Department's website: <https://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/enterprise-agreement-2016-2019>

Since 2013, the number of staff working on mental health policy and programs¹ has remained relatively constant, as follows:

Year	ASL
2013-14	70.6
2014-15	61.0
2015-16	63.9

¹ Staff in Mental Health Services and Mental Health Early Intervention branches, or their equivalent under previous Departmental structures.

