

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Additional Estimates 2016 - 2017

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department/Agency: Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
Outcome/Program: Outcome 2: Indigenous
Topic: Drug and Alcohol rehabilitation services

Senator: Kakoschke-Moore, Skye

Question reference number: 106

Type of question: FPA Friday 3 March 2017, page 32

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 13 April 2017

Number of pages: 2

Question:

Senator KAKOSCHKE-MOORE: Also, some of the programs that are being used through this funding include drug and alcohol rehabilitation services. Do you have any statistics around how many young Indigenous Australians are accessing these services as a result of their interaction with the criminal justice system or even just in general?

Ms Hefren-Webb: Mr Gibson may have some figures around use of our drug and alcohol services. He is looking at me like I have just dropped him in it. I am not sure that it would go to breaking it down by juvenile justice versus adults.

Mr Gibson: We might be able to provide that on notice or at least we will look into that. We collect data that are collected nationally on participation in drug and alcohol services around the country. We would need to look at whether or not that is broken down by age to a sufficient level of disaggregation to be able to answer your question. We probably will not be able to connect the data about participation in drug and alcohol services with participation in say the criminal justice system. I doubt the data would be linked that way automatically but we could see whether there are any studies in that area that make the connection.

Senator KAKOSCHKE-MOORE: It would be helpful. I am thinking about perhaps diversionary programs or if young people are coming into contact with the justice system, and it is obvious that there are some drug and alcohol problems there, if there is a formal record of perhaps referral to these services as part of the process of them going through the justice system.

Mr Gibson: We will see if we can find some information about referrals.

Answer:

The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet's data collection does not enable disaggregation of young Indigenous Australians' access to alcohol and other drug treatment services as a result of interaction with the criminal justice system.

In relation to the Indigenous Advancement Strategy (IAS) funded Indigenous alcohol and other drug treatment services, the Online Services Report (OSR) annually collects information from organisations that receive Commonwealth Government funding to provide health services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. This includes Indigenous alcohol and other drug treatment services (AODTS).

Relevant items sourced from the 2014-15 OSR report include:

- 46 out of 67 (68.7 per cent) providers delivering Indigenous AODTS reported having clients referred from the justice system/police/court. Of the 46 providers, 22 operated in remote or very remote locations.
- 249 Indigenous youth (aged 18 and under) who were provided with residential rehabilitation, representing just fewer than 10 per cent of the providers' client intake.

Related non-Indigenous specific data from AIHW's report *Alcohol and Other Drug Treatment Services in Australia 2014-15* indicate that:

- people diverted from the criminal justice system represent a substantial share of clients treated by alcohol and other drug (AOD) services.
- in the 10 years to 2014-15, the number of AOD treatment episodes provided to clients diverted from the justice system more than doubled, while treatment episodes for other AOD clients increased only marginally.
- in 2014-15, there were 28,065 clients who were diverted from the criminal justice system into AOD treatment, which is about one-quarter (26 per cent) of all AOD clients.
- of these, one-quarter of clients (or 7,317) were aged 10–19 years.