

**Senate Finance and Administration Committee**

**ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**HEALTH PORTFOLIO**

**Supplementary Budget Estimates 2013-14, 22 November 2013**

**Question: E13-208**

**OUTCOME:** 8 - Indigenous Health

**Topic:** Health Funding

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

**Senator:** McLucas

**Question:**

The previous government allocated \$1.17 billion in 2013-14 toward indigenous health initiatives. Is this money still being used for this purpose? If not, why?

- a) This included:
- i. \$118.3 million in 2013/14 for Population Health, for a reduction in the incidence of preventable mortality and morbidity in Australia, including through regulation and national initiatives that support healthy lifestyles. Is this money still being used for this purpose? If not, why?
  - ii. \$54.3 million in 2013/14 for Access to Pharmaceutical Services, for cost-effective medicines, including through the PBS and related subsidies, and assistance for medication management through industry partnerships. Is this money still being used for this purpose? If not, why?
  - iii. \$34.6 million in 2013/14 for Access to Medical Services, for cost-effective medical, practice nursing and allied health services, including through Medicare subsidies for clinically relevant services. Is this money still being used for this purpose? If not, why?
  - iv. \$54.7 million in 2013/14 for Aged Care and Population Ageing, for access to quality and affordable aged care and carer support services for older people, including subsidies and grants, industry assistance, training and regulation of the aged care sector. Is this money still being used for this purpose? If not, why?
  - v. \$24 million in 2013/14 for Primary care, for access to comprehensive community based health care, including through first point of call services for prevention, diagnosis and treatment of ill-health and for ongoing management of chronic disease. Is this money still being used for this purpose? If not, why?
  - vi. \$6.5 million in 2013/14 for Hearing Services, for a reduction in the incidence and consequence of hearing loss, including through research and prevention activities and access to hearing services and devices for eligible people. Is this money still being used for this purpose? If not, why?
  - vii. \$847.8 million in 2013/14 for indigenous health, for closing the gap in life expectancy and child mortality rates for indigenous Australians, including through primary health care, child and maternal health, and substance use services. Is this money still being used for this purpose? If not, why?
  - viii. \$15.4 million in 2013/14 for improved mental health and suicide prevention, including through targeted prevention, identification, early intervention and health care services. Is this money still being used for this purpose? If not, why?

- ix. \$17.6 million in 2013/14 for improved health workforce capacity, quality and mix of the health workforce to meet the requirements of health services, including through training, registration, accreditation and distribution strategies. Is this money still being used for this purpose? If not, why?
- b) Has any advice been sought on changes to any of the aforementioned programmes and/or funding commitments? If so, what programmes and/or funding commitments have been the subject of departmental advice?

**Answer:**

- a) i. Yes, please note this answer is based on the \$116.3 million in 2013-14 figure published in the 2013-14 Portfolio Budget Statements for the Department of Health and Ageing.
- ii. Yes.
- iii. Yes.
- iv. At the time of the Supplementary Budget Estimates hearing of 22 November 2013, the Government had announced machinery of government changes that resulted in aged care funding no longer being administered by the Department of Health.
- v. to viii.  
Yes.
- ix. Yes please note this answer is based on the \$17.7 million in 2013-14 figure published in the 2013-14 Portfolio Budget Statements for the Department of Health and Ageing.
- b) The Government is assessing all discretionary grant spending that is not contractually committed to ensure that there is no waste or duplication and that it is aligned with the Government's spending priorities and commitments.