

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

Additional Estimates 8-11 February 2010

Question: PM56a-c

Topic: Progress of national health reforms

Type of Question: Written

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 26 March 2010

Number of pages: 2

- a) **What is the latest information from COAG with regard to national health reform and the possible federal takeover of public hospital funding?**
- b) **Is PM&C and the COAG Reform Unit actively looking at practical and implementation measures for taking over the full funding of the public hospital system?**
- c) **Has the Prime Minister met with any of his state and territory counterparts since the 7 December 2009 COAG meeting to discuss national health reform and the possible federal takeover of public hospital funding?**

Answer:

- a) On 3 March 2010, the Prime Minister released the health reform plan '*A National Health and Hospitals Network for Australia's Future*'. This plan will be taken to the next meeting of the Council of Australian Governments.
- b) The Government's position, as stated in the policy is that: "should the states not agree to the plan, the Commonwealth reserves its right to seek a mandate from the Australian people to implement the plan. Furthermore, consistent with the Government's previous commitments, the Commonwealth also reserves the right to then proceed to a full funding takeover of the system in the future". The Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet is supporting the Government in the development of the health reform plan.

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- c) The Prime Minister wrote to, and spoke to, his state and territory counterparts prior to the release of the plan. The Prime Minister has also held meetings with state and territory counterparts following the release of the plan.