

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Inquiry into the Dental Benefits Amendment Bill 2012

23 October 2012

Question no: 2

Topic: Inquiry into the Dental Benefits Amendment Bill 2012

Hansard Page: Community Affairs Legislation Committee page 32

Senator Bushby asked:

With respect to the 2012 budget measure increase in the capacity of the dental workforce, can you provide and update on what has been delivered and what funding has been spent under each initiative to date?

Answer:

The Government has committed \$515.3 million in the 2012-13 Budget for dental reforms.

Voluntary Dental Graduate Year Program

The 2011-12 Budget included \$52.6 million over four years (2011-12 to 2014-15) to fund the introduction of the Voluntary Dental Graduate Year Program (VDGYP), which will support the introduction of 50 voluntary dental graduate placements each year from 2013.

The 2012-13 Budget included a further \$35.7 million over three years (2013-14 to 2015-16) to expand the VDGYP, to offer up to 100 places each year by 2016.

The total funding expended or committed to date is \$38,044,576.26 (GST exclusive).

The Australasian Council of Dental Schools (ACODS) has been engaged to develop the curriculum for the VDGYP. ACODS commenced work on this project in April 2012 and it is expected to be completed by the end of December 2012, in time for the first year of the program in 2013.

Australian Information Technology Engineering Centre (AITEC) was engaged as the national administrator of the VDGYP in June 2012. Applications for graduates to participate in the program closed on 14 September 2012. Registrations for dental service providers to indicate an interest in taking on a graduate closed on 7 September 2012. AITEC are in the process of considering the allocation of graduate placements, and dental service providers and associated infrastructure requests; and will soon provide final recommendations to the Department.

Oral Health Therapist Graduate Year Program

The 2012-13 Budget included \$45.2 million over four years (2012-13 to 2015-16) to fund the introduction of an oral health therapist graduate year program (OHTGYP).

The OHTGYP is still in the development and planning stage and there has been no expenditure to date on the program.

The administration arrangements and distribution of available funding is yet to be determined. The administration of the OHTGYP is expected to be advertised through an Invitation to Apply process later this year or early 2013.

A provider will also be engaged to develop the OHTGYP Curriculum. The curriculum is expected to include theoretical and practical components, including opportunities for clinical rotations with the aim of maximising educational and professional experiences across a range of settings and sectors, such as rural and regional areas, aged care settings and Aboriginal Medical Services.

A Dental Workforce Program Reference Group was established, with representation from jurisdictions, professional bodies and students, to provide advice on program design and implementation for these measures. The Reference group met on 24 October 2012.