



**THE HON PETER DUTTON MP
MINISTER FOR HOME AFFAIRS**

**RESPONSE TO THE INDEPENDENT HEALTH ADVICE PANEL
QUARTERLY REPORT 1 JULY 2019 – 30 SEPTEMBER 2019**

I refer to the Independent Health Advice Panel's (the Panel) Quarterly Report for the period ending 30 September 2019 and the summary of that report tabled in Parliament. The summary report outlines the operations of the Panel for the third quarter, being the period from 1 July 2019 to 30 September 2019, and the support provided to the Panel by the Department of Home Affairs (the Department).

I note that this quarter has seen the Panel members increase in number from five to seven members with appointments of persons nominated by the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine and the Australian Psychological Society.

I note that during this reporting period, the Panel reviewed 57 cases under section 198F of the Migration Act 1958 (the Act), and made 12 recommendations to approve a person's medical transfer to Australia. Moreover, during this quarter, the Panel recommended that my decision to refuse the medical transfer of 45 transitory persons to Australia be confirmed on the basis of the facilities available for treatment in Papua New Guinea (PNG) and Nauru being adequate. Additionally, the Panel was not able to conduct a clinical assessment of one case within the requisite time period under section 198F(2) of the Act, and therefore the Panel was, at the end of that period, taken to have recommended that the person's transfer be approved and to have informed me accordingly. The Department continues to support the Panel to perform its functions through the IHAP Secretariat and provided all information requested by the Panel within the agreed timeframes.

During this reporting period, the Department transferred 16 transitory persons from Nauru on the recommendation of our contracted medical services providers under section 198B of the Act. There were no transfers of transitory persons from PNG under section 198B in this reporting period.

The Department recently advised me that incorrect figures were provided to Parliament via the two previous IHAP Quarterly Reports that have been tabled. I will table these revised figures and a letter from First Assistant Secretary, Health Services Division, Stephen Hayward to ensure the record is corrected and accurately reflects the number of transfers undertaken by the Department during each reporting period.

I wish to thank the Panel for their efforts during the quarter ending 30 September 2019.

I note the next Quarterly Report is due after 31 December 2019.

PETER DUTTON