

Senate Community Affairs Committee
ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
SOCIAL SERVICES PORTFOLIO
2016-2017 Additional Estimates Hearings

Outcome Number: 1.10 Working Age Payments

Question No: SQ17-000180

Topic: Social Services Omnibus Bill

Hansard page: Written

Senator Carol Brown asked:

Both the current and lapsed version of these Bills have proposed the removal of the Pensioner Education Supplement and the Education Entry Payment; with the rationale that individuals on payments will be able to access a same or similar service through Job Active Employment Fund. The Employment Fund General Account Guidelines (page 6) states that this fund is for individuals seeking employment through a Job Active Provider; that is, an activity tested payment. Is the Government moving to have Carer Payment activity tested; or do they simply not want carers to be able to afford an education?

Answer:

No, the Government is not moving to have Carer Payment activity tested.

Carer Payment provides income support to people who provide constant care. This is in recognition that the demands of their caring are so great that they are unable to be away from the caring role for a substantial amount of time. Participation in education or training does not impact on the carer's qualification for Carer Payment unless the cessation of care in order to undertake the education or training (including the carers travel time) exceeds 25 hours per week. This allows carers to do the equivalent of around three days of full time paid or voluntary work, study or training each week, while they are providing constant care.

People in receipt of Carer Payment may volunteer for jobactive services.

The cessation of the Pensioner Education Supplement and the Education Entry Payment will not affect a person's Carer Payment entitlement.