

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Budget Estimates 2011-2012, 30/31 May 2011

Question: E11-133

OUTCOME 12: Health Workforce Capacity

Topic: ENDORSED PSYCHOLOGISTS

Written Question on Notice

Senator Adams asked:

Why has the APB under the stewardship of AHPRA regulated to endorse Psychologists in nine different fields when endorsement will increase Medicare rebate costs and the research shows that endorsed psychologists are not more effective at delivering mental health outcomes, than non endorsed generalist psychologists?

Answer:

Health Ministers approved nine areas of practice for psychology on the advice of the Psychology Board of Australia. These are consistent with areas of specialisation recognised by the profession prior to the introduction of the new registration and accreditation arrangements.

There are no changes to Medicare billing arrangements under the Better Access initiative. The Government has determined that psychologists who wish to provide Medicare rebatable Psychological Therapy services under the Better Access initiative, which are at the higher MBS schedule fee level, must be either a member of the College of Clinical Psychologists of the Australian Psychological Society (APS) be assessed by the APS as meeting the requirements for membership of the College or be endorsed by the Psychology Board of Australia to practice in clinical psychology. Psychologists who do not meet the eligibility to provide Medicare rebatable Psychological Therapy services are able to register with Medicare to provide Focussed Psychological Strategies services.