

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Budget Estimates 2012-2013, 30 & 31 May and 1 June 2012

Question: E12-058

OUTCOME 1: Population Health

Topic: National Bowel Cancer Screening Program

Type of Question: Hansard page 73, 31 May 2012

Number of pages: 1

Senator:

Question:

Are we doing anything specifically to focus on ensuring that people in rural and remote communities also benefit from the funds that have gone into the expansion of bowel cancer screening?

Answer:

The expansion of the National Bowel Cancer Screening Program (the Program) announced in Budget 2012 will invite all Australians turning 60, from 1 January 2013, and those turning 70, from 1 January 2015, to also undertake free Faecal Occult Blood Test (FOBT) screening. In the next four years up to 4.8 million eligible Australians will be offered free bowel cancer screening which includes 1.2 million Australians aged 60 and 70 years of age.

The Budget measure to expand the Program includes a communication component, which will commence in 2013-14 to:

- provide information about the changes in the program to the general public;
- help increase the participation of eligible Australians including traditionally underscreened populations, such as Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Australians, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and those with a disability; and
- continue working with organisations and front line health workers, including Aboriginal Health Workers and GPs, to build awareness of the screening program.

Activities will include developing targeted messages about the Program to increase participation of underscreened groups including those in rural and remote communities.