

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 -227

OUTCOME 0: Whole of Portfolio

Topic: Access and Equity

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Number of pages: 2

Senator: Senator Di Natale

Question:

- a) How does your Department ensure that the Government's Access and Equity Strategy is implemented in its entirety and in relation to all Departmental activities?
- b) How does your Department acknowledge the multicultural character of the Australian society, in terms of the services and programs you provide?
- c) How do you measure your success against Access and Equity goals? What evidence do you have that the Department is actively implementing the Government's Access and Equity policy?

Answer:

a)
The Department of Health and Ageing aims to ensure the best possible health outcomes for all population groups, and works hard to reach sub-populations with specific health needs to meet its vision of 'better health and active ageing for all Australians'.

To ensure access and equity concepts are applied to all departmental activities, they are illustrated in our principles-based values, which include:

- delivering services to the public, fairly, effectively and impartially;
- transparency, accountability and responsiveness; and
- respect.

b)
Cultural diversity principles are incorporated into the design and implementation of program and service delivery. The Department takes into account the needs of target groups, and subpopulations within these groups, when designing and implementing policy, managing programs, and monitoring and evaluating programs.

c)

To ensure that progress towards the Government's vision of a socially inclusive society in which all Australians (including those from CALD backgrounds) have the opportunity to participate fully is able to be measured, social change indicators have been established for the Department. The indicators aim to report on health risk factors for social inclusion and the outputs of the Department's health and ageing programs designed to improve inclusion outcomes. They are reported in the Department's Annual Report.

To inform reporting against the indicators the Department utilises population based information from population surveys and studies, such as the National Health Survey, being conducted in conjunction with the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), as well as the ABS Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers and the Census, to determine whether services are meeting population needs.