

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: E12-251

OUTCOME 3: Access to Medical Services

Topic: Medicare Benefits – Decisions of MSAC

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Number of pages: 1

Senator: Senator Di Natale

Question:

The President of the Australian Leukemia and Lymphoma Trials Group (ALLG) wrote to Minister Roxon and MSAC in 2011 expressing concern that patient care would suffer because several MSAC recommendations to remove PET indications in lymphoma from the MBS.

Given these serious concerns about patient wellbeing expressed by a group representing virtually all of the key Australian clinical researchers in the field of malignant haematology, why did the Department's representative on MSAC's Executive dismiss PET scanning?

Answer:

Correspondence was received from the Chair of the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC), Australian Leukemia and Lymphoma Trials Group, in 2011 and was reviewed by the Medical Services Advisory Committee (MSAC) Executive. The MSAC Executive found that there was no new evidence to support the claims made by the Chair of SAC to warrant increasing access to Positron emission Tomography (PET) scanning.

The Department of Health and Ageing wrote to the Chair of SAC advising him of the MSAC Executive decision and that should new clinical evidence become available, MSAC would be happy to consider another application with this new supportive clinical evidence.