

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Supplementary Budget Estimates 2013-14, 20 November 2013

Question: E13-093

OUTCOME: 6 - Rural Health

Topic: Retention of Medical Practitioners in Rural and Regional Australia

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Senator: Boyce

Question:

What further incentives are being developed to attract and retain medical practitioners in rural and regional Australia?

Answer:

The Government is considering the recommendations of several reviews of health workforce programmes.

The Practice Incentives Program (PIP) encourages general practices to provide teaching sessions by providing incentive payments for each three hour teaching session. The Government will increase the teaching payment from \$100 to \$200 per session. Practices participating in the PIP that are situated in rural and remote areas receive a rural loading as further encouragement. The loading varies with the remoteness of the practice.

In addition, the Rural and Regional Teaching Infrastructure Grants have been committed to by the Government, and will provide further support. It is anticipated that the funding will build additional consultation rooms and space for teaching medical students and supervising registrars in rural and regional areas.

The Government has also committed \$40 million over 4 years to support up to 100 additional intern places each year in private hospitals, with priority for rural and regional internships, to bolster the medical workforce in those areas.