

Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee

SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES – 22 OCTOBER 2015 ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Department of Human Services

Topic: Client Engagement

Question reference number: HS 221

Senator: Siewert

Type of question: Written

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Question:

- a) What are the Department of Human Services' expectations and projections of the take up of 'self-service' options?
- b) What percentage of the population is expected to take up self-service by July 2016? What are the targets for the following three years?
- c) In 2014-15, what percentage and how many Centrelink customers visited a Centrelink office?
- d) What percentage is DHS expecting to visit an office at July 2016, July 2017 and July 2018? What reductions in face-to-face visits is DHS intending to achieve?

Answer:

- a) The Department of Human Services' self-service options aim to provide customers with a seamless end-to-end experience by securely connecting them to services they need.

As part of the Department's commitment to the Australian Government's Digital Transformation Agenda, any interaction that occurs more than 50,000 times per year will be accessible through a digital channel by 2017.

- b) The take up of self-service options continues to increase with the focus being primarily on the Department's youth, job seeker and family customer groups. In 2014-15, more than 1.8 million claims were made online, with over 70 per cent of Newstart Allowance, Parenting Payment and Youth Allowance (job seeker) claims submitted online.

The table below shows the growth in self-service transactions since 2012-13.

	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Centrelink	74.5 million	102 million	118.3 million
Medicare	2.9 million	4 million	5.4 million
Child Support	162 000	183 000	230 000

As part of the Department's focus on continuous improvement, work is being undertaken to evaluate and further enhance the performance and uptake of its digital channel.

- c) It is not possible to accurately measure the number of customers visiting Service Centres specifically to access Centrelink services, as:
- The tool used to record customer transactions (Customer First), contains information about both Centrelink and Medicare visits. An exact split of this data between the two programmes is not available.
 - One-stop-shops mean that customers may perform multiple Centrelink and Medicare transactions as part of one visit, with only the primary contact reason for their visit recorded.
 - Some visits are not Medicare or Centrelink specific, for example, myGov transactions.
 - Not all customers visiting a Service Centre will require their details to be recorded.
- d) The Department does not have a specific target in relation to the volume of face-to-face site visits. We have seen a slight decrease in the number of staff assisted transactions and this is freeing up capacity in our non-digital channels to better assist those customers who are vulnerable or have complex needs.