

Senate Committee: Education and Employment

**QUESTION ON NOTICE
Additional Estimates 2014 - 2015**

Outcome: Schools and Youth

Department of Education and Training Question No. SQ15-000074

Senator Lines, Sue asked on 05 March 2015, Hansard, page 8

PC report - out of pocket costs for parents

Question

ACTING CHAIR (Senator Lines): I note that the PC recommends a reduced benchmark price when preschool is provided at a long-day-care centre. What impact will this have on out-of-pocket costs for parents?

Senator Ryan: When we had this discussion at the start of estimates last week, I think, Senator Lines, you outlined that you had some questions for Social Services in this area, and you wanted to know whether they would be there at Social Services.

ACTING CHAIR: Yes.

Senator Ryan: I assume they were, because it has not been raised here. I think that goes to the Social Services part of this particular policy area.

ACTING CHAIR: They punted that back to you. They would not impart anything in relation to universal access.

Senator Ryan: But your question relates to costs in long-day-care centres?

ACTING CHAIR: When preschool is provided in long-day care, which it currently is.

Mr Cook: It is about childcare benefit and childcare rebate and the interface—as you would be well aware, Senator—of the childcare benefit and childcare rebate with universal access. This is also a recommendation to government. Whether the government accepts that or not is a decision for government, so we have not costed—

Ms Paul: I think the PC inquiry themselves, against their own schema of this proposed discount rate, offered what it might be, so there are quite a few considerations here. My own view would be that those considerations lie between us and Social Services, and that is fine.

ACTING CHAIR: Would you take that on notice—

Ms Paul: We will take it on notice.

ACTING CHAIR: because they have punted anything—

Ms Paul: Have they?

Senator Ryan: Whenever they hear the term 'universal access', do they kick back?

ACTING CHAIR: Yes, they do.

Ms Paul: That is fine.

ACTING CHAIR: So, if you take that, just work out who is going to answer that.

Answer

This is a matter for the Productivity Commission. The Department of Education and Training has not carried out any modelling work on possible costs.