

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Budget Estimates 2011-2012, 30/31 May 2011

Question: E11-213

OUTCOME 11: Mental Health

Topic: USAGE AND EVALUATION CONSULTATION

Written Question on Notice

Senator Fierravanti-Wells asked:

In relation to the \$4b referred to at page 48, is this figure part of standing appropriations? Please confirm that this is an estimated amount which will come out of consolidated revenue and therefore is not actually in the Health and Ageing budget?

Answer:

Yes, funding of \$4 billion referred to on page 48 (Hansard, 30 May 2011) is part of a special appropriation within the Health and Ageing Budget. Medicare Benefits Schedule related services for the Better Access program are paid for through 'Special appropriations - Health Insurance Act 1973 - medical benefits'.

The Better Access initiative is part of the Medicare Benefits Schedule which is a demand driven program provided for under this special appropriation. The figure of \$4 billion is the projected outlay on Better Access over the next five years (refer to the Treasury 2011-12 Budget document "National Mental Health Reform", page 8).