

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Budget Estimates 2011-2012, 30 May 2011

Question: E11-495

OUTCOME 11: Mental Health

Topic: MENTAL HEALTH – BETTER ACCESS EVALUATION

Hansard Page: CA 46

Senator Fierravanti-Wells asked:

So it was just in generic terms; it did not go into the actual therapies?

Answer:

Components A: *A study of consumers and their outcomes* and A.2: *A study of consumers and their outcomes focusing on the occupational therapy and social work sectors* of the Better Access evaluation collected information of the treatment profile of participating consumers. Evaluation findings indicate the majority of consumers received evidence-based psychological therapies with over 80 per cent receiving cognitive-behavioural therapy. These studies were not designed to collect detailed information on the types of therapies allied mental health professionals used in providing mental health services to consumers but rather the outcomes as a result of that treatment.

It should be noted that the Medicare Benefits Schedule specifies the range of appropriate therapies to be provided under Better Access. These are:

1. Psycho-education (including motivational interviewing);
2. Cognitive-behavioural Therapy including:
 - Behavioural interventions;
 - Behaviour modification;
 - Exposure techniques;
 - Activity scheduling;
 - Cognitive interventions:
 - Cognitive therapy;
3. Relaxation strategies:
 - Progressive muscle relaxation;
 - Controlled breathing;
4. Skills training:
 - Problem solving skills and training;
 - Anger management;
 - Social skills training;
 - Communication training;
 - Stress management;
 - Parent management training;
5. Interpersonal Therapy (especially for depression); and
6. Narrative therapy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.