



Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee
Additional Estimates 2025–26
Wednesday, 11 February 2026
Daily summary

The committee met from 9.01am until 8.47pm.

The committee called the Health, Disability and Ageing portfolio, discussing the following topics:

Department of Health, Disability and Ageing (DoHDA) – Whole of Portfolio/Corporate Matters

- Status of questions on notice from the 2025-26 Supplementary Estimates hearings, including requests for information from Senators requesting information to be prepared ahead of estimates.

DoHDA – Outcome 3: Ageing and Aged Care

- Average wait time for Support at Home Packages (SAH), including the release of priority SAH packages;
- Process of qualifying for a SAH package, but pass away before receiving a package;
- Accessing respite care in the ACT using SAH packages;
- Funding arrangements/allocation to release 83 000 Home Care Packages;
- Providers meeting care minutes targets, and supplements tied to compliance versus non-compliance;
- National Redress Scheme payments, including Stolen Generations reparations as an assessable asset within the aged care space;
- Review of the implementation of SAH, and evaluation activities regarding the new Aged Care Act;
- Integrated assessment tool and eligibility for older Australians for home care since SAH commenced; and
- National Health Reform Agreement, and number of older Australians experiencing a delayed discharge from hospital due to an inability to access supported aged care facilities.

Inspector-General of Aged Care

- Definitional adequacy and regulation of restrictive practices to protect older Australians, particularly those with dementia.

Independent Health and Aged Care Pricing Authority

- Stage implementation of price caps, cost-based pricing, and discussions around various costings studies.

Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission

- Star rating compliance and issues surrounding purported visitor bans.

DoHDA – Outcome 1: Health Policy, Access and Support

- National Health Reform Agreement;
- National Immunisation Program Schedule;
- Funding related to Aboriginal community-controlled health services;
- Department's work on the National Agreement on Closing the Gap targets;
- Work of the Women's Health Products Working Group following the pelvic mesh inquiry;
- Asherman's syndrome caused by uterine curettes;
- 'Unleashing the Potential of our Health Workforce' Scope of Practice Review;
- Access to proton therapy in Australia;
- Recall of sunscreens due to the potential for harm and adverse events for consumers;
- Issues with medicinal cannabis regulation and access, including consumer vaping regulations;
- Regulations surrounding advertisements of certain medicines, including prescription medicines;
- Flu vaccine data and coverage in Australia, including its purported link to a rise in flu cases in vaccinated populations;
- Pertussis vaccine (whooping cough) in children, including media reporting around peaking levels of pertussis;
- National Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Agreement and Strategy; and
- Chief Medical Officer's statement declaring syphilis a Communicable Disease Incident of National Significance.

Australian Centre for Disease Control

- Work of the new Australian Centre for Disease Control and its potential research functions.

Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care – released from hearing

Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency

- Issues concerning the prevalence of antisemitism and islamophobia within the medical system and the rollout of bespoke training programs relating to racism and discrimination more broadly; and
- Prioritisation of cultural safety and elimination of racism for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Australia's health system.

AIHW

- Cancer data and reporting in Australia and its association with vaccination status.

National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC)

- Grant funding awarded to the NHMRC for animal testing/non-human primates for research purposes; and
- The NHMRC's funding of the Vaccine Adjuvant Discovery and Development Centre of Research Excellence through the Centres of Research Excellence grant scheme.

The committee agreed to release the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care, Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency and the National Rural Health Commissioner were released from hearing, and no questions were asked of the National Health Funding Body.

The committee will next meet 9.00am on Thursday, 12 February 2026 in Senate Committee Room 2S1, calling the Health, Disability and Ageing and Social Services portfolios' outcomes and agencies.

Please contact the secretariat on (02) 6277 3515 or community.affairs.sen@aph.gov.au if you have any questions.