

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY QUESTION ON NOTICE

Department of Health, Disability and Ageing

Senate Community Affairs References Committee

Support at Home Program

01 April 2026

PDR Number: IQ26-000037

Integrated Assessment Tool - Suggested \$4bn in Unspent Funds – HCP's

Written

Senator: Anne Ruston

Question:

1. What evidence does the Department have that unspent funds reflect a lack of need, rather than people being unable to access services due to workforce shortages or thin markets?
2. Has the Department analysed how much underspending is due to unmet need versus over-allocation?
 - a. If yes, can you provide that analysis?
3. Has the Department considered that consumers may be deliberately underspending to save for periods of higher need due to a lack of surge capacity?
4. How will flexibility be maintained under individualised budgets, given providers can no longer shift resources between clients as needs change?

Answer:

1. There are several drivers which impact on the accumulation of unspent funds.
2. No. The accumulation of unspent funds is due to several inter-related factors.
3. Yes.
4. The Support at Home program does not allow providers to shift resources between clients as needs change. This is a continuation of arrangements under the Home Care Packages program.