

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: IQ26-000022

Ability and barriers to override that IAT during care assessments

Spoken

Hansard page number: 10-11

Senator: David Pocock

Question:

Senator DAVID POCOCK: I've been listening, Mr Pugh. Sorry to interrupt, but how many times has the assessor-delegate raised concerns and said, 'Listen, I don't agree with this but I can't override it.' Do they speak to their manager? What's the process? How many times has that happened? Never?

Mr Pugh: I'm not sure how we would capture that.

CHAIR: So you've not captured that?

Senator DAVID POCOCK: You wouldn't know, because they can't change it?

Ms Atkinson: It's not a decision that, as a part of their delegation, would change. We don't have—

Senator DAVID POCOCK: But you just told me the assessor-delegate is there to look at it and say, 'I think, Senator Askew, you haven't put in your information correctly,' and when asked, 'How many times has that happened?' you say, 'We don't even track it; we wouldn't know.' Where is the human in all of this?

Ms Atkinson: I think we've jumped to a different question, almost. You asked previously how many times an assessor has challenged the outcome of the algorithm, but we're now jumping to 'How many times has a delegate intervened on the input to the tool?'

Senator DAVID POCOCK: Because you told me that is what their job was. They obviously can't change it, and they've got to rubberstamp it, but they were at least looking at the quality and saying, 'Well, this does actually look like it was done right.' I'm asking, if that is their job, how many times have they said, 'This may be concerning'?

Ms Atkinson: I would have to take on notice what level we might be able to provide on that, noting that it's a conversation that potentially occurs before the tool is finalised if there is a concern that the delegate has raised in working with the assessor.

Answer:

Before an assessment is finalised (and an Integrated Assessment Tool (IAT) classification is produced), a warning message appears for the assessor to ensure the information they have entered is correct prior to finalising the IAT. The Department of Health, Disability and Ageing does not collect data on how frequently changes occur prior to finalisation.