

Senate Community Affairs Reference Committee

Public Hearing – 03 October 2019 ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Department of Social Services

Topic: Senate Community Affairs Reference Committee inquiry into Centrelink's compliance program - Written Question 1 - Policy and process lessons learned from OCI

Question reference number: SQ19-000276

Senator: Rachel Siewert

Type of Question: Written. Hansard Page/s:

Date set by the Committee for the return of answer: 9 December 2019

Question:

The Commonwealth Ombudsman submitted that lessons learned from the OCI system should be retained and applied to new measures, such as new Child Care Subsidy payments.

Does the Department of Social Services have any processes in place to ensure these lessons will be applied to future programs?

Answer:

The Department of Social Services reviews relevant reports from independent offices, such as the Commonwealth Ombudsman, for findings and learnings that may have a wider application for current and future policy and programs.

Senate Community Affairs Reference Committee

Public Hearing – 03 October 2019 ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Department of Social Services

Topic: Senate Community Affairs Reference Committee inquiry into Centrelink's compliance program - Written Question 2 - Financial counselling

Question reference number: SQ19-000277

Senator: Rachel Siewert

Type of Question: Written. Hansard Page/s:

Date set by the Committee for the return of answer: 9 December 2019

Question:

Has the Department of Social Services provided more financial support to financial counselling services and/or community legal services to support an increased number of clients due to the online compliance system?

If not, why not?

If so, please outline this support.

Answer:

Financial Counselling and Capability services, funded by the Department of Social Services, are delivered by community and local government organisations to help people in personal financial difficulty address their financial problems, manage debt and make informed choices about their money.

The department does not fund legal assistance services.