



SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

8 August 2014

Senator the Hon Stephen Parry
President of the Senate
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Mr President

On Wednesday 26 March 2014, the Senate referred the following matter to the Community Affairs References committee for inquiry and report by 16 July 2014.

The Terms of Reference for the inquiry are:

The out-of-pocket costs in Australian healthcare, with particular reference to:

- a. the current and future trends in out-of-pocket expenditure by Australian health consumers;
- b. the impact of co-payments on:
 - i. consumers' ability to access health care, and
 - ii. health outcomes and costs;
- c. the effects of co-payments on other parts of the health system;
- d. the implications for the ongoing sustainability of the health system;
- e. key areas of expenditure, including pharmaceuticals, primary care visits, medical devices or supplies, and dental care;
- f. the role of private health insurance;
- g. the appropriateness and effectiveness of safety nets and other offsets;
- h. market drivers for costs in the Australian healthcare system; and
- i. any other related matter.

The Committee has received 105 submissions, and held a public hearing in Melbourne on Thursday 3 July 2014 and in Canberra on Tuesday 29 July 2014.

On 16 June 2014, the Senate extended the reporting date to 8 August 2014. The Committee wishes to extend this reporting date to 22 August 2014. This would allow the Committee to fully consider its findings and conclude its deliberations.

Yours sincerely,

Senator Rachel Siewert
Committee Chair