

Senate Standing Committee on Community Affairs

ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES – 24 FEBRUARY 2011 ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Human Services Portfolio

Topic: Grandparent Adviser Program

Question reference number: HS 20

Senator: Brown

Type of question: Hansard CA page 105

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Question:

Senator CAROL BROWN - I am just looking after my state. What was the answer or do I have to read it?

Mr Sandison - We have the five locations at this stage. We are not aware of a decision to extend.

Senator CAROL BROWN - Is there another hotline for grandparents outside of that area to call?

Mr Sandison - There is a range of different service lines that are done through Centrelink that are not related to just a person on the ground in a particular location.

Senator CAROL BROWN - Is it operating really well?

Mr Sandison - that is part of our broader engagement overall for Centrelink. I would have to get some further information and can take on notice where it is specific to the particular group. I can add that to some of the other questions.

Answer:

To assist grandparent carers in seeking advice, in relation to government support such as family assistance and income support payments, there is a Free-call number 1800 245 965 which is available nationally. Most customers can be assisted by phone, often from the initial contact.

Centrelink currently has six Grandparent Advisers, one each in Perth, Melbourne, Brisbane and Adelaide, and two in Sydney.

As well as offering support with government payments, the Advisers work with community services, such as grandparent support groups.

The Grandparent Adviser service is operating well. There is an increased awareness in the community which is demonstrated by the wide variety of referral sources, such as community support groups, reports in various media publications and other government agencies and departments.