

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Additional Estimates 2011-2012, 15 February 2012

Question: E12-116

OUTCOME 4: Aged Care and Population Ageing

Topic: Community Care Packages – St Ann’s application to exchange care type

Written Question on Notice

Senator Bushby asked:

- a) The Department of Health and Ageing has rejected a proposal from St Ann’s Homes in Tasmania to convert residential beds to community care packages. What was the reason?
- b) Is the Department reviewing this decision?
- c) If so, why?

Answer:

- a) The Department of Health and Ageing is unable to provide specific details about the St Ann’s Homes application, as it is protected information under the *Aged Care Act 1997* (the Act). In respect of any exchange of care type application from an Approved Provider, however, the Department provides formal written advice about the outcome of the application to the applicant.

All applications to exchange care type are assessed in accordance with the provisions of the *Aged Care Act 1997* and the Exchange of Care Type Guidelines for Approved Providers published on the Department's website. The guidelines make clear that the number of places able to be exchanged by an approved provider, if any, will be marginal and will be highly dependent on the planning objectives of the aged care planning region, including the number of places made available in the current financial year and the effect on any indicative releases of places (which are usually made available through the competitive Aged Care Approvals Round).

In the Southern Aged Care Planning region in which St Ann's operates, at 30 June 2010 there were 27.2 operational community care places for every 1,000 people aged 70 years and over. As at 30 June 2011 this figure had increased to 28.2 operational community care places for every 1,000 people aged 70 years and over. These figures are above the planning benchmark of 27 community care places per 1,000 people aged 70 years and or over.

It should be noted that most community care places, as they become available, are allocated through an ACAR. The ACAR is a competitive process which affords all approved aged care providers in a given region an equal opportunity to apply for any available community care places - a particularly important consideration given that applications for community care places are highly competitive.

- b) No.
- c) Exchange of care type decisions are not reviewable, however the provider can submit another application should it wish to do so.