

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Additional Estimates 2011-2012, 15 February 2012

Question: E12-132

OUTCOME 7: Hearing Services

Topic: AUSTRALIAN HEARING CENTRES - REHABILITATION PLUS EVALUATION

Written Question on Notice

Senator Boyce asked:

The Department confirmed that it has received the evaluation conducted by Communio Pty Ltd on the Rehabilitation Plus program. In response to questions about the Rehab Plus program, the department advised that it found only a 13 per cent non-usage rate hearing devices.

- a) Can the Department explain how they define non usage of 13 per cent?
- b) Please outline explicitly what constitutes "usage"?
- c) What other usage patterns have been identified and can the Department please provide statistics?

Answer:

- a) In the 2010 survey on the Rehabilitation Plus program, non usage is derived from client responses to question two of the International Outcome Inventory – Hearing Aids (IOI\_HA) questionnaire which categorises usage in terms of the number of hours a client uses their hearing aid per day. The figure of 13 per cent represents the estimated proportion of new clients surveyed who did not use their hearing aid(s) at all on an average day in the past 2 weeks, adjusted for response rate.
- b) “Usage” is defined by the clients responses to question two of the IOI-HA and refers to the number of hours on an average day a client reported that they used their hearing aid(s).
- c) Results from previous client satisfaction surveys (2002 to 2008), have indicated that on average, approximately 39 per cent of voucher clients use their hearing aid(s) on a frequent basis (defined as using their hearing aid(s) on average for 8 or more hours per day). A further 24 per cent of voucher clients use their hearing aid(s) between 5 and 8 hours per day, and 24 per cent of voucher clients use their hearing aid(s) between 1 and 4 hours per day. Approximately 10 per cent of voucher clients use their hearing aid(s) less than 1 hour per day or never use their hearing aid(s). The remaining 3 per cent of clients did not answer the question on hearing aid(s) usage.

Additional information on the reported usage patterns by clients in respect of the 2010 Rehabilitation Plus Benchmarking Survey will be available when the results and analysis of the survey are published by the National Acoustic Laboratory. A presentation on the results will be made by the National Acoustic Laboratory at the Audiology Australia National Conference in July 2012. It is expected that the National Acoustic Laboratory will submit an article for publication in a peer reviewed journal following the conference.