

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Additional Estimates 2011-2012, 15 February 2012

Question: E12-317

OUTCOME 2: Access to Pharmaceutical Services

Topic: PRESCRIBING PARAMETERS OF ANTIPSYCHOTIC DRUGS IN AGED CARE HOMES

Written Question on Notice

Senator Fierravanti-Wells asked:

Please provide details as to what are the current parameters for prescribing antipsychotic drugs to residents in aged care facilities including:

- a) Prescribing rates; and
- b) Data regarding the cost of antipsychotic drugs.

Answer:

The decision to use antipsychotic medicines is a clinical decision made by medical practitioners with their patient, and the patient's family as required.

The parameters around the prescription of all prescription required medicines, for residents in aged care facilities, including antipsychotic medications, are determined under the relevant state and territory law.

Under the *Aged Care Act 1997* approved providers are responsible for the quality of health and lifestyle outcomes for residents of aged care homes. This includes ensuring that they have an adequate number of appropriately trained staff at all times, residents are referred to appropriate health professionals according to their needs and preferences, and that residents' medication is managed safely and correctly.

The standards of care delivery in homes subsidised by the Australian Government are monitored by the Aged Care Standards and Accreditation Agency, which assesses a home's performance against these standards.

In relation to Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) prescriptions, all prescriptions for each medicine, regardless of a patient's residence, must meet the relevant requirements, including restrictions and indications, contained in the *Schedule of Pharmaceutical Benefits*.

a) and b)

PBS data is not available disaggregated by a patient's place of residence.