

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Additional Estimates 2011-2012, 15 February 2012

Question: E12-419

OUTCOME 1: Population Health

Topic: MELANOMA

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Senator Furner asked:

I am aware of reports about some groundbreaking opportunities in the detection and treatment of melanoma cancer. Could you elaborate on those issues to the committee? Do we know how far way we might be from having some sort of treatment in respect to positive prevention?

Answer:

In November 2011, an article was published in the journal Nature about a study which identified a melanoma predisposing gene called melanoma-lineage-specific oncogene microphthalmia-associated transcription factor. This study involved 47 researchers from Australia, United States and Britain.

This research is an important contribution to our understanding of melanoma and such findings could ultimately impact on the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of melanoma. Further research is underway to identify all the genetic mutations in melanoma. The application of this work in clinical practice is some years away.