

Senate Community Affairs Committee
ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
FAMILIES, HOUSING, COMMUNITY SERVICES AND
INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS PORTFOLIO
2011-12 Additional Estimates Hearings

Outcome Number: 6

Question No: 273

Topic: Forced Sterilisation

Hansard Page: 16/02/2012 - CA80

Senator Boyce asked:

What has been the level of engagement and the number of meetings that the Office of Women has undertaken in relation to the forced sterilisation of women and girls with disabilities?

Answer:

Consistent with the Beijing platform, this Government and the previous Government have supported gender mainstreaming as the best practice approach to ensuring gender is considered in the full range of decisions affecting women. Primary policy responsibility for the issue of forced sterilisation of women and girls with disabilities does not reside with the Office for Women (OfW).

The OfW is available to meet and discuss issues with other relevant organisations and departments and provide advice as needed. OfW does not record the number of meetings it has participated in with other agencies.

Requirements for authorising sterilisation for adults who have an impaired capacity to consent are in the domain of the states and territories. For children, the Family Court may authorise procedures. Also, tribunals in four states have concurrent jurisdiction.