

Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee

ADDITIONAL BUDGET ESTIMATES - 14 FEBRUARY 2013 ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Human Services Portfolio

Topic: Chronic Disease Dental Scheme - Waivers

Question reference number: HS 11

Senator: Bushby

Type of question: Written

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 5 April 2013

Number of pages: 2

Question:

- a) How many dentists has the Department made requests on behalf of, to the Department of Finance and Deregulation, to waive debts that arose due to non-compliance with the requirements of the CDDS?
- b) How many dentists has the Department sought to have their debts waived, either in full or part?
- c) How many dentists that the Department has sought to have their debts waived have been refused a waiver of debt?
- d) How many dentists involved in the waiving of debt process have been notified that their debt has not been waived (i.e. rejected)?
- e) On what date/s was the Department notified by the Special Minister of State of successful/unsuccessful applications for waiver? Please list each case.
- f) On what date/s were the relevant dentists notified by the Department as to whether their debt has/has not been waived?
- g) What were the guidelines/criteria used when assessing the applications?

Answer:

- a) As at 28 February 2013, the Department has made applications on behalf of 40 dental practitioners.
- b) 40.
- c) To date, no refusal of waiver applications has been received by the Department.
- d) Not applicable.
- e) On 30 October 2012, the Department was notified that debts had been waived in full by the Special Minister of State in respect of 17 dental practitioners.
On 24 January 2013, the Department was notified that debts had been waived in full by the Special Minister of State in respect of 20 dental practitioners.
The Department is not able to list the names of dental practitioners concerned due to privacy considerations.

f) On 7 November 2012, the Department wrote to each of the group of 17 dental practitioners to notify them that their debts had been waived.

On 13 February 2013, the Department wrote to each of the group of 20 dental practitioners to notify them that their debts had been waived.

g) The Department is assessing the suitability for waiver application against the criteria stated by the Minister for Human Services in his speech to the Senate Supplementary Budget Estimates hearing on 18 October 2012. The Minister said the following circumstances would be considered suitable for waiver applications:

- the late or non-provision of treatment plans and quotes for audited dental practitioners' claims made before April 2010; and
- in cases after this time where an audited practitioner has shown their intent to meet the Scheme's requirements. This intent is established if treatment plans and quotes were provided within a reasonable timeframe after the service was delivered.