

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Additional Estimates 13 & 15 February 2013

Question: E13-207

OUTCOME 2: Access to Pharmaceutical Services

Topic: Home Medicines Review

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Senator: Senator Di Natale

Question:

- a) Is the department aware of independent evaluations showing low levels of awareness of the Home medicines review program among consumers, in spite of the fact that community pharmacists are funded to promote and initiate Home medicines reviews under the Fifth Community Pharmacy Agreement?
- b) Was this research canvassed as part of the Department's discussion with the Guild on the sustainability of the Home medicines review program earlier this month?

Answer:

- a) Under the Fifth Community Pharmacy Agreement, community pharmacists are not funded to initiate or promote the Home Medicines Review (HMR) Program. HMR service providers are only funded to provide the HMR service through accepting General Practitioner (GP) referrals, conducting the patient interview and clinical assessment and providing and discussing the written report with the GP.

A HMR service can only occur with GP referral. GPs are responsible for identifying if a patient is suitable and would benefit from a HMR service. Pharmacists, patients and/or carers and other health professionals involved in the patient's health care are able to recommend to the GP that a HMR service may be suitable. Brochures about the HMR Program targeted at consumers are made available to medical practices and pharmacies for distribution to consumers.

- b) Discussions with the Pharmacy Guild of Australia in relation to the sustainability of the HMR Program made significant reference to the Campbell Report and other sources of significant evidence.