

Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee

ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES – 26 FEBRUARY 2015 ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Department of Human Services

Topic: Home Care Payments

Question reference number: HS 31

Senator: Cameron

Type of question: Written

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 17 April 2015

Number of pages: 1

Question:

The 5 February 2015 Aged and Community Services Australia weekly report includes an item:

Update on payments

We have been asked to inform you that the Department of Human Services (DHS) will begin to dialogue with providers who have been underpaid or overpaid as part of the home care payments process during 2014. There are approximately 200 providers who have mostly received overpayments. Depending on the amounts, repayment schedules will be individually negotiated.

- a) I understand this is a manual process, when will the home care payment process be fully online?
- b) When is DHS going to resolve the problems with Medicare Claiming for Home Care Providers?
- c) What is the level of overpayment and underpayment and what steps is DHS taking to resolve the problem?

Answer:

- a) - b) The department has planned to progressively implement an online system for Home Care providers commencing in late April 2015, enabling providers to submit their claims on line and reducing manual processes.
- c) The level of overpayment and underpayment was low in the context of annual Aged Care expenditure.

The system issues that caused the under and overpayments have been resolved. Following a verification exercise, providers with an underpayment have been paid the additional amount owing with their next advance. Providers that have received an overpayment are given the option of offsetting the entire amount against their next advance; offsetting the portions of the total amount progressively over an agreed period of time against future advances; or as a one-off amount to be recovered as a payment to the department.