

## Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee

### ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES – 26 FEBRUARY 2015 ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

#### Department of Human Services

**Topic:** Aged Care – Home Care Providers

**Question reference number:** HS 54

**Senator:** Polley

**Type of question:** Written

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

**Number of pages:** 1

#### **Question:**

The Acting Dep Sec Ms Carolyn Smith informed the Community Affairs Legislation Committee that issues around the Medicare payments for home care providers had been resolved.

- a) Can she explain how a number of providers have significant amounts outstanding, including one provider who has outstanding payments dating back to August 2014?
- b) What is being done to ensure the information provided by DHS in relation to the resolution of issues is consistent with the experience of providers?

#### **Answer:**

- a) - b) The department makes monthly advance payments at the beginning of each month to aged care Home Care providers. The monthly advance is based on the claim submitted in a previous month. The advance is then reconciled when the provider submits their monthly claim adjustment for a particular month.

As specified in section 47-4 (2) of the *Aged Care Act 1997*, the payment of advance payments to Home Care providers is contingent on the receipt by the department of a claim adjustment for the month preceding the previous month. For example, a March advance is only payable if a December claim adjustment is received by the department. While the department has worked with providers to help them submit claim adjustments, where providers have not submitted relevant claim adjustments with the required information, the department is unable to make advance payments.

The department has been working closely with providers and provider peak organisations to ensure that they are provided the necessary assistance. Where a provider considers they may have an amount outstanding, they are able to contact the department who investigates the issue (including appointing a case manager where necessary) and works with the provider to resolve the payments.

In resolving issues with providers the department ensures provider concerns are addressed.