

**Senate Community Affairs Committee**  
**ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**  
**SOCIAL SERVICES PORTFOLIO**  
**2014-15 Additional Estimates Hearings**

**Outcome Number: 3.1 Access and Information**

**Question No: SQ15-000120**

**Topic: DHS – means and asset testing**

**Hansard page: Written**

**Senator Polley, Helen** asked:

What is the difference between pre and post July 1 2014 in terms of vacancies in both residential aged care and home care packages?

Has there been any indication – either quantitative or qualitative - that there has been an increase in the numbers of vacancies in home care packages and residential aged care since the introduction of means and asset testing?

**Answer:**

In 2013-14, occupancy in residential care averaged 93.2%. In the first six months of 2014-15, occupancy in residential care averaged 92.8%.

Home care occupancy averaged about 88.4% in 2013-14. Between July and November 2014, home care occupancy averaged 88.5%.

There was a spike in overall admissions to residential care in the months immediately prior to 1 July 2014 (May and June 2014) followed by lower than usual admissions in July and August 2014. An increase in respite admissions was also evident in July and August 2014.

The peak and trough experienced in residential care admissions between May and August 2014 were self-offsetting and resulted in the total number of residents returning to levels anticipated in line with historical trends.

In Home Care a number of provider groups have expressed concerns about people not taking up Level 1 and Level 2 packages. Occupancy levels in Level 1 have remained flat since 1 July 2014 and there has been a small decline in Level 2. This is being offset by increased occupancy in Level 3 and Level 4 packages. The Department is continuing to monitor this.