

**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: SQ15-000328**

**Topic: Gateway**

**Hansard page: Written**

**Senator Polley, Helen** asked:

Are you aware the Gateway operators refer consumers with questions about fees, charges and their finances to services such as NICRI? Given that NICRI will no longer be funded after 25 years of service, where will consumers be referred to now?

Are you aware that DSS staff have suggested ASIC's MoneySmart is a suitable online service to assist older Australians with questions about navigating the fees, charges, assets, income, etc? Is it the position of DSS that MoneySmart is a suitable replacement for NICRI?

**Answer:**

There are a number of existing services funded by the Government that an individual can choose to access for guidance on aged care fees, charges and their finances more broadly. These include the Department of Human Services (DHS) Financial Information Service (FIS); the My Aged Care website and contact centre; and the Australian Securities and Investments Commission's (ASIC) MoneySmart website.

Funding of the National Information Centre on Retirement Investments (NICRI) under the Financial Management Program concluded on 28 February 2015. The My Aged Care contact centre does not currently refer callers directly to NICRI. Callers seeking advice on the financial implications on entering aged care are referred to the Department of Human Services (DHS) Financial Information Service (FIS) in the first instance and are advised that they can also consider seeking independent financial advice.

FIS officers are equipped to assist a customer to make informed financial decisions. A FIS officer can be contacted by telephone or if there are complex issues to be discussed, an appointment may be arranged to meet with the FIS officer in person.

The My Aged Care website has a page aimed at informing consumers on how to seek assistance in managing finances. This page currently provides links to both the DHS FIS and MoneySmart websites. The page is located here: (<http://www.myagedcare.gov.au/financial-and-legal/my-finances>)

Consumers who wish to receive an indication of what they can expect to pay for their care based on their income and assets can do so through the My Aged Care Residential Care Fee Estimator (<http://www.myagedcare.gov.au/fee-estimator/residential-care>) or the My Aged Care Home Care Fee Estimator (<http://www.myagedcare.gov.au/fee-estimator/home-care>).

ASIC's MoneySmart website provides free, independent guidance for all Australians to make the most of their money.