

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Additional Estimates 2015 - 2016, 10 February 2016

Ref No: SQ16-000309

OUTCOME: 3 - Access to Medical and Dental Services

Topic: Hearing Services

Type of Question: Hansard Page 57, 10 February 2016

Senator: Gallagher, Katy

Question:

CHAIR: Senator Gallagher has some questions for Office of Hearing Services.

Senator GALLAGHER: Yes. There is a changing of the guard. I have a few questions in relation to the complaints statistics published by the Office of Hearing Services. Can you provide some details on the issues that were raised in the complaints from providers and members of the public?

Ms Duffy: I will just find that information. There are a number of categories that we classify the complaints under, both for client complaints and provider complaints. It might be easier if I provide that broken down on notice, but we received 22 client complaints in the last quarter, October to December 2015. The majority of those were around client expectations about the level of service not being met. So, clients having an expectation before they went in to receive the service and for whatever reason that was not delivered. It was mostly around the hearing device not restoring their hearing. Many people think that because they have a hearing device it will restore their hearing like glasses, and that is not the case.

Answer:

The Office of Hearing Services (the Office) received 36 complaints from October to December of 2015. These complaints were received from clients of the Hearing Services Program (the program), service providers, and members of the public.

Complaints from clients may relate to advertising, relocations, expectations about devices or services not being met, maintenance, multiple repairs, access to partially subsidised devices, reports of pressure to purchase a partially subsidised device, service delivery by the Office, or program legislation or policy. Service provider complaints relate to advertising and marketing by other service providers, inadequate service delivery by the Office, legislation or policy, client relocation issues, and incentives and commissions. Complaints from members of the public were about advertising, over servicing and eligibility.

Category	Quarter 2, October - December 2015
Client	22
Provider	10
Public	4
Total	36