

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Additional Estimates 2016 - 2017, 1 March 2017

Ref No: SQ17-000035

OUTCOME: 4 - Individual Health Benefits

Topic: Child Dental Benefits Schedule

Type of Question: Hansard Page 54, 1 March 2017

Senator: Watt, Murray

Question:

Senator WATT: But those estimates that were published in MYEFO would have assumed that the cuts had gone ahead. The minister surely cannot go out and make an announcement without knowing what it is going to cost.

Mr Cormack: Well, the minister has made a policy decision. He is entitled to make a policy decision. And we provide advice on a range of matters in the lead-up and the follow-on from those policy decisions.

Senator WATT: Did you provide advice on what that change would cost?

Mr Cormack: There would have been some information provided to the minister. I do not have that information with me.

Senator WATT: Could you possibly get that for us over the lunch break?

Mr Bowles: We will take on notice what we can and cannot provide, in the context of the budget.

Senator WATT: It cannot be a secret. It cannot be too hard to work out what that is, and you should be able to come back to us about that today.

Mr Bowles: Well, it depends. If it is in the context of the budget, which it is, that is not normally released until a Tuesday in May.

Senator WATT: So, we cannot ask questions about what announcements that have already been made will cost? We have to wait and see what they cost in the budget?

Mr Bowles: As I said, I will take it on notice.

Answer:

These costings will be finalised for publication in the May Budget.