

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Additional Estimates 2016 - 2017, 1 March 2017

Ref No: SQ17-000085

OUTCOME: 6 - Ageing and Aged Care

Topic: Short-Term Restorative Care (STRC) Programme

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Senator: Polley, Helen

Question:

Senator POLLEY: Okay. While 33.4 per cent of Australians aged 65 and older live in New South Wales, only 21 per cent of the STRC places were allocated. There seems to be some significant difference about how this has been allocated. If you cannot explain it tonight then you will take on notice.

Ms Rule: We can take it on notice. As I said at the beginning, the process that underpins the allocation of these places is based on data and is based on consultation with the sector about areas of need, and that applied to this program as well as the broader aged-care assessment round.

Answer:

The allocation of aged care places, including Short-Term Restorative Care (STRC) is based on the aged care provision ratio. In the 2015-16 Budget, the Australian Government adjusted its commitment to reaching a ratio of 125 aged care places for every 1,000 people aged 70 years or over by 2021-22, by allowing for the ratio to include two flexible care places (Transition Care or STRC).

The method adopted to distribute STRC places took into account the aged care provision ratio and the current allocation of transition care places in each jurisdiction. More STRC places were allocated to those jurisdictions with the lowest ratio of existing transition care places, ensuring more equitable access to short-term flexible aged care places. As at 30 June 2016, Queensland and Western Australia had the lowest ratio of transition care places relative to their population aged over 70.

The Department of Health consulted with the aged care sector on the proposed distribution of places. The proposed distribution was adjusted according to feedback received during consultation. The department was advised that at least eight to ten places were needed per provider to run a viable STRC service. To ensure viable services were available in the Northern Territory, Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory, a small number of places were reallocated from the states receiving the largest allocation of places (New South Wales, Western Australia, Victoria and Queensland) to these jurisdictions.