

**Senate Community Affairs Committee**

**ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**HEALTH PORTFOLIO**

**Additional Estimates 2016 - 2017, 1 March 2017**

**Ref No:** SQ17-000305

**OUTCOME:** 6 - Ageing and Aged Care

**Topic:** Home Care

**Type of Question:** Written Question on Notice

**Senator:** Polley, Helen

**Question:**

Can you outline how the Increasing Choice reforms will benefit or impact those living in remote parts of Australia like Alice Springs? Please outline what alternative delivery models have been developed for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) and regional and remote communities?

**Answer:**

A consistent national system for prioritising access to home care has been established and is managed by My Aged Care. This will allow for a more equitable and flexible distribution of packages to consumers based on individual needs and circumstances, regardless of where they live.

Home care packages are no longer offered through an Aged Care Approvals Round, allowing new providers offering innovative care delivery models to come into the market. Existing providers are no longer limited by the number of home care places they can provide. This offers them an opportunity to expand their businesses to meet local demand and consumer expectations, including in rural and regional regions. Many current Commonwealth Home Support Programme and residential care providers are now able to apply for approved provider status to deliver home care packages, opening up potential providers to deliver services to consumers including rural and remote areas.

Many smaller providers in rural and regional areas will be at an advantage in this regard because they have close relationships with their community, and a greater understanding of community need.

Increasing Choice in Home Care supports providers to offer consumer-centric care plans tailored for individual consumers. Regardless of where a consumer is located, service providers are expected to deliver care and services that are flexible and culturally appropriate.

The changes will promote a diversified market that can better support Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) consumers and regional and remote communities.

The Department of Health will closely monitor the new arrangements to ensure that all consumers, including people with special needs and those living in rural and regional areas, are able to access care in an equitable manner.