

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Additional Estimates 2016 - 2017, 1 March 2017

Ref No: SQ17-000349

OUTCOME: 2 - Health Access and Support Services

Topic: National Cancer Screening Register

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Senator: Watt, Murray

Question:

Please outline the strategy for communicating the new cervical screening test, including expenditure and timelines.

Answer:

The communication plan for the implementation of the new cervical screening test (the Renewal) will inform women, healthcare professionals, relevant specialists and pathology providers about the new Cervical Screening Test and how women will transition to the renewed screening program.

The delivery of information will be through a range of communication products, including direct communication via letters from the Department of Health, education and training activities, resources and ongoing periodic engagement with peak professional organisations.

A summary of the approach to communications for each key stakeholder group is below:

- Women will be provided with information about the changes to the cervical screening program via printed brochures and electronic resources distributed via medical practices, social media and the website, www.cancerscreening.gov.au/cervical commencing approximately two months before the Renewal on 1 December 2017.
- General Practitioners (GPs) and other health care professionals will be supported through the provision of online training modules, a range of resources delivered in print and electronically, presentations at a range of professional meetings by key experts, resources and articles published in key medical journals and newsletters. Communication, educational and training products and activities will begin to be delivered to health care professionals from now until 1 December, with increasing activity closer to 1 December 2017.
- Pathology providers will be engaged consistently until 1 December, to support them to implement the new HPV and LBC tests through the release of a number of technical documents developed in consultation with the relevant pathology committees.

The expenditure for this communications strategy is being reviewed following the revised Renewal implementation date and the need to provide additional information to health care professionals on the interim measures to support the current cervical screening program. \$2.09 million was provided as part of the 2016-17 Renewal Budget measure for communications and the development of healthcare professional and consumer information resources.