

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Budget Estimates 2011-2012, 31 May 2011

Question: E11-516

OUTCOME 2: Access to Pharmaceutical Services

Topic: DEFERRAL OF LISTINGS

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Senator Fierravanti-Wells asked:

- a) Did they (affected companies) receive any advanced notice that is before 25 February?
- b) When were they called? In the morning, before the press release went out of when?
- c) Can you tell me who made the call, please?
- d) Was it a call, was it in writing or by email in relation to each of those deferrals?
- e) Was there any consultation with any of those affected companies?

Answer:

a), b), c) and d)

In line with long-standing practice, all companies affected by a Cabinet decision about the listing of medicines on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) are informed by an officer of the Department prior to any public announcement.

In relation to the deferral of PBS listings and price increases announced by Minister Roxon on 25 February 2011, all affected companies, apart from one, were contacted by Ms Adriana Platona, Assistant Secretary, Pharmaceutical Evaluation Branch, on 24 February 2011. One company could not be contacted on 24 February 2011 and was advised on 25 February 2011, prior to the Minister's media release on that date. These phone calls were followed up with letters to the affected companies, signed by Ms Platona.

- e) As per any Cabinet process, there was no consultation with the applicants on the Cabinet process.