

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Budget Estimates 2011-2012, 30/31 May 2011

Question: E11-044

OUTCOME 4: Aged Care and Population Ageing

Topic: DEMENTIA INITIATIVE FUNDING

Written Question on Notice

Senator Adams asked:

There are significant funding implications for the Dementia Initiative as a consequence of the Department of Health and Ageing's strategic review where spending has been downgraded. Can the Department advise precisely how it is intended to support and sustain the services provided in the present financial climate to an increasing number of sufferers and confirm whether or not any specific programmes and/or services will have to cease or will be withdrawn and if so, which ones.

Answer:

No programs under the Dementia Initiative will cease in 2011-12 as a result of the strategic review. As part of the 2011-12 Budget, the Australian Government announced a range of improvements to administrative arrangements within the Department of Health and Ageing. These improvements include the establishment of 18 flexible Funds which will improve the way the Department manages its grants and other programs.

The establishment of flexible Funds will enable the continuation of support for health and ageing priorities through the provision of grants, but facilitate a more streamlined and flexible approach. These Funds will reduce red tape, provide increased flexibility to respond to emerging issues and anticipate change, and deliver better value for money, quality and evidence based funding.

Support for Dementia is included in the new Fund structure under the following Funds:

- Aged Care Service Improvement and Healthy Ageing Grants Fund – Dementia Behaviour Management Advisory Services; Dementia Training Study Centres; National Dementia Support Program; and the Dementia Community Support Grants;
- Aged Care Workforce Fund – Dementia Care Essentials, Dementia Education and Training for Carers, Dementia Skills Training for people in the community;
- Single Point of Contact for Health Information, Advice and Counselling Fund – National Dementia Helpline currently funded as part of the National Dementia Support Program; and
- National Health and Medical Research Council – Dementia Collaborative Research Centres.

The establishment of the Aged Care Service Improvement and Healthy Ageing Grants Fund will enable better support for activities that promote healthy and active ageing, better response to existing and emerging challenges including dementia care and better support those services targeting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

The Department will be consulting with the various sectors, including key stakeholders representing people with dementia, over the course of 2011 on the implementation arrangements for a number of Funds to be established in 2011-12. The priorities for the new Aged Care Service Improvement and Healthy Ageing Grants Fund will be identified in consultation with key stakeholders for dementia.

The first round of grants allocated through the Fund will commence from July 2012. Importantly, the Government has taken steps to provide certainty to those individuals and organisations that currently have funding agreements in place. All of these funding agreements will be honoured in full.