

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Budget Estimates 2011-2012, 30/31 May 2011

Question: E11-487

OUTCOME 12: Health Workforce Capacity

Topic: MATERNITY REVIEW/INDEMNITY INSURANCE

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Senator Boyce asked:

In terms of the maternity review, are you looking at the question of indemnity insurance and who it should be applied to? I am thinking particularly in terms of midwives who assist with home births.

Answer:

Under the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme, the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (the National Law) requires that Professional Indemnity Insurance (PII) arrangements are in place in relation to all practitioners' practice of their profession. Privately Practicing Midwives (PPMs) were unable to comply with this condition as an insurance product which covered planned homebirth has not been available since 2002. In 2009, Health Ministers agreed to a two year exemption for PPMs attending a homebirth with the intention that with improved data collection, an insurance product would become available. However, discussions with insurance companies have suggested that it is unlikely that an insurance product will be available in the foreseeable future.

The PII exemption expires on 30 June 2012.