

Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee

BUDGET ESTIMATES - 29 MAY 2012 ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Human Services Portfolio

Topic: Removal of Cash from Service Centres Providing Medicare Services

Question reference number: HS 22

Senator: McKenzie

Type of question: Hansard pages 112-113

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 27 July 2012

Number of pages: 1

Question:

- a) Senator McKENZIE: The first issue I would like to address is the cessation of the cash payment by Medicare. How many payments for Medicare benefits are currently made by cash at the service centres—the actual number, not a percentage of total payment?

Ms Campbell: We do have percentages; we do not have exact numbers.

Senator McKENZIE: Can we have the percentage and then can we get the actual on notice.

Mr Tidswell: The number of cash payments being made is 1.3 per cent.

Senator McKENZIE: Of the total?

Mr Tidswell: Of the total. But I do not have a total figure for you.

Senator McKENZIE: But if you have the percentage you will have originally had—

Mr Tidswell: Yes. We can get back to you on that.

Senator McKENZIE: You will be able to grab that on notice. Thank you.

- b)Of the people who claim Medicare benefits in person at a service centre, excluding those who have been bulk billed et cetera, what proportion currently receive their benefits in cash?

Mr Tidswell: It is 8.3 per cent.

Senator McKENZIE: What is the proportion of bodies?

Mr Tidswell: We will have to take that on notice.

Answer:

- a) In 2010-11, 26.6 million Medicare services (8.3 per cent of the total Medicare Program services) were paid by cash in the department's Service Centres. Each service is defined in the Medicare Benefits Schedule and has a unique item number. A Medicare claim can contain one or more services.
- b) In 2010-11, 83.9 per cent of people who claimed their Medicare benefits in a Service Centre received the payment by cash.