

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Budget Estimates 2012-2013, 30 & 31 May and 1 June 2012

Question: E12-299

OUTCOME 3: Access to Medical Services

Topic: Medicare Benefits – MSAC Recommendations

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Number of pages: 1

Senator: Senator Fierravanti-Wells

Question:

According to evidence by Mr Bartlett, new MBS funding is considered as part of budget decisions along with other things.

- a) Does this mean that it is the norm that MSAC positive recommendations made in the 12 months leading up to the annual Federal Budget would be considered in the context of funding in that budget?
- b) Is MBS funding only considered as part of the expenditure review committees deliberations for the health portfolio?
- c) If not, does this mean that positive MSAC recommendations made months after the federal budget process miss out and have to wait for the next budget cycle to be funded?

Answer:

- a) Medical Services Advisory Committee (MSAC) positive recommendations can be considered at any time of the year. The financial implications of new listings are contained in the Budget papers, or if announced after Budget, in the Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook (MYEFO).
- b) Yes. All Health Portfolio funding, including funding for the Medical Benefits Schedule (MBS) is considered by the Expenditure Review Committee of the Cabinet, which meets on a regular basis throughout the year.
- c) No. The Government makes decisions about MBS funding throughout the year.