

Senate Community Affairs Committee
ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
FAMILIES, HOUSING, COMMUNITY SERVICES AND
INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS PORTFOLIO
2012-13 Budget Estimates Hearings

Outcome Number: 5

Question No: 249

Topic: Migration Treatment of Disability

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Boyce asked: Budget Paper No. 2 Immigration and Citizenship, Migration Health Requirements item reads:

“The Government will reform the health criteria that applicants must meet to obtain an Australian visa, at a cost of \$4.6 million over four years. Under current arrangements, visa applicants are refused entry to Australia where the estimated costs of treating a pre-existing health condition are above the Significant Cost Threshold set at \$21,000. The reform will increase the Significant Cost Threshold from \$21,000 to \$35,000 to better reflect current health costs, and remove the requirement for offshore Humanitarian Visa applicants to meet the Significant Cost Threshold criteria. This reform will commence on 1 July 2012. These reforms are in response to the report of the Joint Standing Committee on Migration on the Migration Treatment of Disability: Enabling Australia.”

In this regard FaHCSIA received the following budgetary allocations \$100,000 in 2012/13 and 2013/14, rising to \$200,000 the next and \$400,000 in last year of forward estimate.

What is the budgetary allocation to FaHCSIA for?

Answer:

The Department of Immigration and Citizenship expects that raising the Significant Cost Threshold (SCT) will lead to an additional 38 individuals entering Australia over the forward estimates period, primarily under the family reunion program, who would not otherwise have been granted a visa. Potential FaHCSIA costs arise because the average age of a migrant entering under the increased SCT is estimated as being 72 years and they will be reuniting with family in Australia, who may be eligible for carer related payments such as Carer Payment, Carer Allowance and Carer Supplement, due to their caring responsibilities for the individual who has migrated under the increased SCT.