

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

SOCIAL SERVICES PORTFOLIO

Budget Estimates 2013-14, 5/6 & 7 June 2013

Question: E13-018

OUTCOME: 4: Aged Care and Population Ageing

Topic: Dementia Treatment

Type of Question: Written Questions on Notice

Senator: Boyce

Question:

According to a study by the AIHW – our hospitals are failing to correctly identify patients with dementia – and that this systemic failure leads to as many as 50 per cent of hospital patients who have dementia not being identified. (1)

This according to the study causes the following:

- Inadequate treatment (2)
- Longer hospital stays (16.4 days as opposed to 8.9 days) (3)
- Higher treatment costs (\$7720 - \$5010) (4)
- Makes hospitals a dangerous place for dementia sufferers (5)

The study illustrates:

- Poor communication and coordination between health services (6)
- Only 1 in 5 hospital staff with dementia training (7)

Given that there are currently 322,000 Australians suffering from this condition and that number is expected to triple by 2050 what urgent steps is the Department taking to do much, much better? Could you respond please in relation to each of the seven points above?

Answer:

Please refer to E13-017.