

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Budget Estimates 2014 - 2015, 2/3 June 2014

Ref No: SQ14-000436

OUTCOME: 2 - Access to Pharmaceutical Services

Topic: Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme Co-payment

Type of Question: Hansard Page 45, 2 June 2014

Senator: McLucas, Jan

Question:

Does the Government expect there to be a reduction in scripts being filled as a result of the increased co-payment?

Answer:

Many factors can impact script volumes: patients substituting one medicine for another, changing to combination items to reduce co-payments; the price of some medicines falling below the general patient co-payment; and peaks in seasonal ailments may effect demand. Further, some patients choose not to have their over the counter (OTC) medications filled as Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) scripts (of which there are 84 items on the PBS) and instead purchase them over the counter at a cheaper price.