

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Budget Estimates 2014 - 2015, 2/3 June 2014

Ref No: SQ14-000482

OUTCOME: 3 - Access to Medical and Dental Services

Topic: Out-of-pocket Health Care Expenses

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Senator: Xenophon, Nick

Question:

A recent independent study with almost 10,000 households across Australia found that almost \$1 in every \$4 of total health care costs are financed by out-of-pocket expenses. Was any consideration given to this prior to the introduction of the GP co-payment?

Answer:

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare report 'Health expenditure Australia 2011-12' shows that individual contributions to total health expenditure decreased as a percentage of total health expenditure from 18.3 per cent in 2010-11 to 17.3 per cent in 2011-12. Total expenditure on medical services was \$23.9 billion, of which the Commonwealth government paid \$18.6 billion or 77.9 per cent. Individual patient out-of-pocket costs accounted for 12.1 per cent. The Department of Health was aware of this report when it was released in September 2013.