

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Budget Estimates 2014 - 2015, 2/3 June 2014

Ref No: SQ14-000483

OUTCOME: 3 - Access to Medical and Dental Services

Topic: GP Co-payment

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Senator: Xenophon, Nick

Question:

What alternatives to the GP co-payment were considered as a means to control growth in Medicare spending?

Answer:

A range of measures were announced in the 2014-15 Budget which affect Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) expenditure including: replacing the complicated Medicare safety nets with a single safety net; reducing the optometry fees and removing charging caps; continuing the suspension of the MBS indexation beyond 1 July 2014 by 24 months (excluding GP services); and amendments to other MBS arrangements for optometry services.