

**Senate Community Affairs Committee**

**ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**HEALTH PORTFOLIO**

**Budget Estimates 2014 - 2015, 2/3 June 2014**

**Ref No:** SQ14-000489

**OUTCOME:** 3 - Access to Medical and Dental Services

**Topic:** Optometry services

**Type of Question:** Written Question on Notice

**Senator:** Xenophon, Nick

**Question:**

The changes to comprehensive eye examination arrangements appear to be motivated by cost, rather than clinical evidence. In addition, there will be higher access barriers to optometry services. Consumers will not only receive smaller rebates for optometry services, but due to the removal of the existing charging cap, optometrists will be able to set their own fees in the future. This is likely to increase out-of-pocket costs for optometry services. What is the evidence for this change?

**Answer:**

The changes to comprehensive eye examinations for asymptomatic patients was a decision of Government made through normal budget processes.