

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Budget Estimates 2015 - 2016, 1 - 2 June 2015

Ref No: SQ15-000307

OUTCOME: 3 - Access to Medical and Dental Services

Topic: Dental Care

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Senator: Di Natale, Richard

Question:

With the freeze on the indexation of the rebates, what impact is that expected to have on the level of bulk billing? To what extent will the freeze increase any co-payment charged under the scheme (Child Dental Benefits Scheme)?

Answer:

It is a requirement of the Child Dental Benefits Schedule (CDBS) that services provided in the public sector must be bulk billed. While private dentists can charge their own fees, from 1 January 2014 to 31 March 2015, 96 per cent of CDBS services provided by private dentists resulted in no out of pocket cost to the patient, and of these over 90 per cent were bulk billed. It is not expected that private dentists will significantly change their current charging practices.