

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Budget Estimates 2015 - 2016, 1 - 2 June 2015

Ref No: SQ15-000336

OUTCOME: 2 - Access to Pharmaceutical Services

Topic: Pharmacy Agreement

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Senator: Di Natale, Richard

Question:

Does DoH accept the Auditor's finding that the decision not to prepare an official record of discussions over a \$15 billion funding Agreement is not consistent with 'sound practice'? Is there an explanation as to why 'sound practice' wasn't met by the Department of Health?

Answer:

The Department of Health accepts that it is better practice to prepare an official record of meetings such as those that took place in relation to the negotiation of the Fifth Community Pharmacy Agreement ('the 5CPA'). Nevertheless, it should not be inferred that the Department is not in possession of any records in relation to these meetings. Negotiating the 5CPA was an iterative process the outcomes of which were recorded and then embodied and documented in the 5CPA itself. Sufficient records were kept to ensure that the matters agreed during the negotiations were encapsulated in successive versions of the draft agreement and ultimately in the 5CPA itself.