

**Senate Community Affairs Committee**

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

**Budget Estimates 2015 - 2016, 1 – 2 June 2015**

**Ref No:** SQ15-000359

**OUTCOME:** 2 - Access to Pharmaceutical Services

**Topic:** cohealth

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

**Senator:** Di Natale, Richard

**Question:**

The Australian Medical Association and the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia are already working on a model for pharmacists to work in GP clinics. Is this exactly how cohealth has been operating for 20 years?

**Answer:**

While the Department of Health acknowledges the benefits of the integrated care model operated by cohealth, the pharmacy cannot continue to be financially supported without approval under section 90 of the *National Health Act*. Accordingly, the pharmacy is not able to receive dispensary remuneration through the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS), in the same manner as all community pharmacies throughout Australia.

The Department has offered to assist the pharmacy in making an application to the Australian Community Pharmacy Authority. If the application is successful, the pharmacy will be able to operate under the PBS arrangements, continue its integration with GP services and participate in the Sixth Community Pharmacy Agreement.