

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Budget Estimates 2015 - 2016, 1 – 2 June 2015

Ref No: SQ15-000362

OUTCOME: 2 - Access to Pharmaceutical Services

Topic: cohealth

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Senator: Di Natale, Richard

Question:

Does the Government agree that the community-driven, not-for-profit pharmacy model follows international best practice, and if so, does the government also recognise that cohealth conforms to international best practice?

Answer:

The Government acknowledges the benefits of community-driven pharmacies and it financially supports many pharmacies of this type. For example, Friendly Society pharmacies are common in most states including Victoria. They are not only owned and operated by not-for-profit organisations, but are also approved under section 90 of the *National Health Act* to dispense medicines and receive dispensary remuneration through the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) arrangements, in the same manner as all community pharmacies.

The cohealth pharmacy has not been approved to operate under the PBS arrangements. Accordingly, the Department of Health 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 and participate in the Sixth Community Pharmacy Agreement.