

Senate Community Affairs Committee
ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
SOCIAL SERVICES PORTFOLIO
2015-16 Budget Estimates Hearings

Outcome Number: 3.2 Home Support

Question No: SQ15-000358

Topic: Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP)

Hansard page: Written

Senator Helen Polley asked:

Please provide an update on the sector's transition to the CHSP?

How is the Government addressing consumer concerns about fee increases?

Answer:

- a) The establishment of the CHSP will provide stability for both providers and clients. The overwhelming majority of providers will continue to be funded until 30 June 2018, and there will be a strong focus on continuity of care for existing clients now and when the CHSP begins.

The Government has undertaken a range of communication and engagement activities with the sector in order to support transition to the CHSP. This has included:

- Public consultation on key documents for the CHSP, which was supported by national face-to-face briefings in May- June 2014 and March – April 2015.
- Interactive webinars in June 2014 and June 2015, which reached close to 5,000 people.
- Direct letters to providers regarding the programme, including funding arrangements and the grant agreement process.
- Email updates through the Department's 'Bulk Information Distribution' system.
- Resources on the Department's website at www.dss.gov.au/chsp, including a series of information sheets.

On 24 June 2015, the Government wrote to providers who would be transitioning to the CHSP to announce that \$20 million in funding would be provided to contribute towards activities already underway to ready themselves for the 1 July changes and throughout the transition period.

All providers transitioning to the CHSP, who are providers at 26 June 2015, are eligible for this additional funding.

- b) On the 17 June 2015, the Government announced that they had listened to feedback and would not proceed with a mandatory national fees schedule for the CHSP from 1 July 2015, and instead a principle-based fees approach would be developed. This information is available at <https://www.dss.gov.au/our-responsibilities/ageing-and-aged-care/overview/advice-to-the-aged-care-industry/certainty-for-commonwealth-home-support-programme>.

The Government will work with the National Aged Care Alliance, whose membership includes a number of peak organisations including consumer groups, to settle a principles-based fees policy for release in July 2015.