

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Budget Estimates 2017 - 2018, 29 May 2017

Ref No: SQ17-000588

OUTCOME: 5 - Regulation, Safety and Protection

Topic: Special Access Scheme

Type of Question: Hansard Page 102, 29 May 2017

Senator: Singh, Lisa

Question:

Senator SINGH: Let us just start generally. Since the regulatory changes to the Special Access Scheme late last year, how many applications has the TGA received for access under category B? And how many have you approved?

Dr Skerritt: I have the figures from 1 January 2016 to the present. I do not have them from another point in time. We can take that on notice. I actually have seen an acceleration since the regulatory changes in the number of applications per month. To answer your question, since 1 January 2016 to 26 May 2017, last Friday, we have had 66 approvals. Of those, 34 are still pending, where we have asked for further information. So they are not sitting with us. We have gone back and said, 'You've written "medicinal cannabis" on this form. What form of medicinal cannabis?' That is an example where we have asked for further information. We have had 19 applications withdrawn—by the doctor, not by us. That brings it to a total of 119.

Answer:

Note that Adjunct Professor Skerritt's response above was for the period 1 January 2016 to 29 May 2017. The question above is for the period since the regulatory changes to the Special Access Scheme came in to place at the beginning of November 2016. Hence the following figures are a subset of the figures given by Adjunct Professor Skerritt above, as they are for a lesser period of time.

The figures for the period 1st November 2016 to 29th May 2017 are:

Number of applications received for Special Access Scheme Category B	96
Number of applications approved for Special Access Scheme Category B	58
Number of applications rejected for Special Access Scheme Category B	0
Number of applications pending for Special Access Scheme Category B	32
Number of applications withdrawn for Special Access Scheme Category B	6