

**Senate Community Affairs Committee**

**ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**HEALTH PORTFOLIO**

**Budget Estimates 2017 - 2018, 30 May 2017**

**Ref No:** SQ17-000648

**OUTCOME:** 6 - Ageing and Aged Care

**Topic:** Home Care Letters

**Type of Question:** Hansard Page 102, 30 May 2017

**Senator:** Polley, Helen

**Question:**

Senator POLLEY: A range of clients were sent paperwork that included a unique referral code after 27 February suggesting they had been allocated a package when in fact they had only been added to the national queue. Can you confirm that this occurred?

Dr McCarthy: To clarify, you are asking whether someone had been informed that they had been allocated a package but had not?

Senator POLLEY: Yes. They had only been added to the queue. There was a unique referral code suggesting that they had been allocated a package when in fact they had not; they had just been put on the queue. Did this happen?

Ms Buffinton: I am aware that there has been a small number—well less than one per cent of letters—

Senator POLLEY: You are saying less than one per cent?

Ms Buffinton: Yes.

Senator POLLEY: What is that figure? Do you have the actual figure?

CHAIR: The raw number.

Ms Buffinton: I will have to take that on notice. A very small percentage of clients received home care letters with some incorrect information.

**Answer:**

Consumers are provided with a unique referral code when they have been assigned a home care package. They use this referral code to seek care with a provider of their choice.

While waiting for the assignment of a package, consumers should not be issued with a referral code to access home care services. However, under the previous home care arrangements, the Aged Care Assessment Team (ACATs) could generate a letter that included referral codes for all aged care services.

Some letters were generated by ACATs in error with incorrect home care referral codes. The exact number of incorrect letters generated is unknown. This matter was identified during the transition period to the new home care arrangements and has now been resolved. ACATs are now unable to generate a letter that includes incorrect referral codes.