

**Senate Community Affairs Committee**

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

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

**Ref No:** SQ17-000659

**OUTCOME:** 2 - Health Access and Support Services

**Topic:** Newstart allowance

**Type of Question:** Hansard Page 50, 30 May 2017

**Senator:** Watt, Murray

**Question:**

Senator WATT: I think that is important to know. Is there anyone present who was involved in those discussions?

Mr Smith: Yes, the department was consulted.

Senator WATT: Prior to the announcement of this measure?

Mr Smith: Yes.

Senator WATT: When did that occur? How far before the budget?

Mr Smith: I would want to take that on notice. In the weeks and months leading up to, but I would be very careful about giving you a date without checking that.

**Answer:**

The Department was first consulted on the Department of Social Security "Welfare Reform: Drug and alcohol abuse" Budget measure on 15 December 2015.

The Department was consulted on this specific Budget measure in the lead up to the 2017-18 Budget from early 2017. Department of Social Security had previously consulted the Department about the concept of testing welfare recipients.