

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Budget Estimates 2017 - 2018, 30 May 2017

Ref No: SQ17-000719

OUTCOME: 6 - Ageing and Aged Care

Topic: Home Care Packages

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Senator: Siewert, Rachel

Question:

- a) What steps have been taken to receive and report on individual consumer feedback about the new processes (e.g. MAC Portal, template letters, national queue, and wait times) since 27 February?
- b) What improvements if any have been made as a result of individual consumer feedback?

Answer:

The Department of Health has undertaken various activities to receive and analyse consumer feedback on the home care reforms.

In May 2017, the My Aged Care contact centre called over 500 consumers who were not receiving home care, but had recently been assigned a home care package. Phone calls were made to consumers to find out whether they understood the information provided to them and the reasons as to why they had not yet entered into a Home Care Agreement.

The Department has also received feedback through Ministerial correspondence from consumers and providers, and through the My Aged Care contact centre. The Department actively responds to these queries individually and provides the information and support as requested by consumers and their carers.

In addition, the Department is developing an evaluation strategy to measure the effectiveness of the home care reforms in the context of broader aged care reforms. An initial evaluation will be conducted after six months of operation. A second evaluation will be conducted after a year of operation, forming the start of a regular schedule of annual evaluation.

Since the introduction of the home care reforms, the Department has used consumer and service provider feedback received to:

- refine information so that messages are clearer and better targeted to assessors, providers and consumers;
- identify information gaps so that stakeholders can be better informed through webinars, bulk information distribution service messages, and public forums;

- strengthen information and support to the My Aged Care contact centre to better equip them to consistently address enquiries; and
- create additional support materials, such as fact sheets, to address common themes in the issues.