

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Budget Estimates 2017 - 2018, 29 & 30 May 2017

Ref No: SQ17-000820

OUTCOME: 6 - Ageing and Aged Care

Topic: ACAT and RAS Assessments

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Senator: Polley, Helen

Question:

The Department has stated they it has identified areas of concern in relation to ACAT and RAS delays. Can you outline areas of concern for each state and how they relate to the action plans?

Answer:

The Department of Health engages the state and territory governments to manage the Aged Care Assessment Programme and 13 contracted organisations to deliver Regional Assessment Services (RAS) as a core component of My Aged Care.

The Department acknowledges that there are valid reasons why some assessments take longer than the agreed average service level, including:

- a change in client circumstances such as hospitalisation;
- difficulties contacting the client or delays with scheduling a face-to-face appointment;
- clients moving between regions;
- challenges with assessing regional and remote clients;
- peaks and troughs with the volume of referrals; and
- changing volumes of high, medium and low priority clients.

The Department is aware of regional differences in the timeliness of assessments and that there are a number of areas where clients have been waiting for an extended period of time for an assessment.

The Department is actively managing the performance and accountability of jurisdictions and RAS organisations. Where performance or quality is of concern, plans are put in place and actively managed to ensure a timely pathway to services for older people in need of care.