

**Senate Community Affairs Committee**

**ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**HEALTH PORTFOLIO**

**Budget Estimates 2017 - 2018, 29 May 2017**

**Ref No:** SQ17-000934

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

**Topic:** Telehealth

**Type of Question:** Written Question on Notice

**Senator:** Griff, Stirling

**Question:**

Regarding mental health items: Given GPs can offer 10 face-to-face visits for focussed psychological strategies, will the department consider allowing patients who live more than 50km from their GP to access this as a telehealth service?

**Answer:**

GP Focussed Psychological Strategy services are not in scope for the telehealth psychology services announced by the Australian Government.

Only registered GPs who have completed the mental health skills training accredited by the General Practice Mental Health Standards Collaboration are able to claim up to ten focussed psychological strategies services every 12 months. Not all GPs are eligible to claim these items.

The Department is considering access issues, and has commenced work to develop more detailed guidelines to support the implementation of the new telehealth psychological services budget measure. This work will progress in targeted consultation with key stakeholders and technical experts as appropriate to support the effective implementation of this initiative by 1 November 2017.