

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Budget Estimates 2017 - 2018, 30 May 2017

Ref No: SQ17-000948

OUTCOME: 6 - Ageing and Aged Care

Topic: ACAT

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Senator: Griff, Stirling

Question:

- a) What is the current waiting period for an ACAT assessment in each state?
- b) Can the Department detail the steps to be taken by each state and territory department to address timeliness and quality of ACAT assessments, as outlined in the plans they have supplied to the Department (referred to pg 92 Hansard, May 30)

Answer:

- a) Waiting periods are measured from the time the assessment referral is issued to when the assessment is complete. When measuring this data, the Department of Health (the Department) (in accordance with the Australian Bureau of Statistics advice) uses median rather than mean, as the most relevant statistical measure for averages as it is less subject to data variance.

The following table provides the median and mean wait times for Aged Care Assessment Team (ACAT) assessments.

Table 1: Time from Assessment Referral Issued to Assessment Complete (ACAT) – 1 July 2016 to 31 December 2016

State	High Priority		Medium Priority		Low Priority	
	Median Average (days)	Mean Average (days)	Median Average (days)	Mean Average (days)	Median Average (days)	Mean Average (days)
New South Wales	4	7.4	4	7	22	25.9
Victoria	4	10.5	4	8.8	28	35.3
Queensland	2	16.6	5	10.3	28	38.6
South Australia	14	41.1	3	7	16	20.5
Western Australia	1	3.8	4	13	14	27
Tasmania	1	5.1	7	13	76	90.4
Northern Territory	6	37.7	9	15.3	18	26.2
Australian Capital Territory	1	2.1	5	5.7	14	15.9
National	3	13.1	4	8.7	24	32.4

Source: Aged Care Data Warehouse. Data extracted 30 April 2017

Caveats

- data is point in time data
- minor system issues and user errors may have contributed to some data issues in the 1 July 2016 to 31 December 2016 period

b) There are two focal points to improvement. The first is for jurisdictions to ensure they are providing sufficient resources, support and training to ACAT teams within their jurisdiction and actively monitoring performance and accountability for quality and timeliness. While the states and territories are required to report and validate assessment data biannually, jurisdictions have access to regular performance reporting and the Department is actively engaging with jurisdictions on assessment timeliness and quality.

The second is on remediating outliers i.e. assessments that remain open in the My Aged Care system for a significant length of time. These outlier assessments have contributed to key performance indicators not being met in the 1 July to 31 December 2016 reporting period. The majority of the outliers require action from the states and territories in order to be completed in the My Aged Care system.