

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Budget Estimates 2017 - 2018, 29 & 30 May 2017

Ref No: SQ17-001047

OUTCOME: 5 - Regulation, Safety and Protection

Topic: Medicinal Cannabis

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Senator: Di Natale, Richard

Question:

There are no GP authorised prescribers for medicinal cannabis. What is the reason for this?

Answer:

The Authorised Prescriber Scheme status is granted by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) in response from an application from a Medical Practitioner, with formal support from an Ethics Committee. Both specialists and general practitioners are eligible to apply to become an Authorised Prescriber.

To be an Authorised Prescriber the medical practitioner must have the training and expertise appropriate for the condition being treated and the proposed use of the product.

Furthermore, Authorised Prescriber status is granted for a particular medicinal cannabis product for a specified class of patients (ie patients with the same indication). As general practitioners see a range of patients with differing medical conditions and indications the Special Access Scheme may be more appropriate in these circumstances.

It should also be noted that the TGA has not received any applications for Authorised Prescriber for a medicinal cannabis product from a general practitioner.