

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Supplementary Budget Estimates 2010-2011, 20 October 2010

Question: E10-014

OUTCOME 13: Acute Care

Topic: NATIONAL BLOOD ARRANGEMENTS

Written Question on Notice

Senator Siewert asked:

- a) With respect to the current review of the national blood arrangements that I understand is hoped will improve the process and the cost effectiveness and efficient use of public monies, can the NBA update the committee on the timing of the completion of the review?
- b) Is it still expected in mid 2011?
- c) Why wasn't the review brought forward or the current contract extended for the supply of blood products for a further 12 months to take advantage of the outcomes of the review rather than proceeding with a tender and contract negotiations that would lock the Government into a three year agreement?
- d) If neither timing nor process can be modified, does the NBA have any interim results from the review that will be utilised in this current tender process; and if so, will you share those with relevant stakeholders

Answer:

- a) An administrative review of Australia's national blood arrangements was conducted in 2009. Four projects based on the recommendations of the review are currently being progressed and are on track to be completed by May 2011.
- b) The Department will synthesise the findings of the four reports, to inform Government in mid 2011 of the issues relating to the sustainability of the blood sector.

c and d)

It is not clear which tender process is being referred to in the question. Any contract to purchase blood products is based on benchmarked market prices which is unlikely to be influenced by the outcomes of the review. The review is exploring the broader issues in relation to blood demand and utilisation including examining cost drivers.