

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Supplementary Budget Estimates 2010-11, 20 October 2010

Question: E10-056

OUTCOME 11: Mental Health

Topic: MENTAL HEALTH

Written Question on Notice

Senator Siewert asked:

What qualifications, work experience or years of experience are required as a minimum standard for a 'mental health social worker'?

Answer:

To be eligible to register with Medicare to provide focussed psychological strategies (FPS) services under the Better Access to Psychiatrists, Psychologists and General Practitioners through the Medicare Benefits Schedule (Better Access) initiative, a social worker must:

- be a current member of the Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW);
- demonstrate at least two years (post qualifying) social work practice experience in mental health or related field and how this experience meets the standards outlined in *AASW Practice Standards for Mental Health Social Workers (2008)*;
- provide evidence of receiving at least two years (post qualifying) supervision in mental health or related field; and
- accrue 30 Continuing Professional Education (CPE) points specifically relevant to mental health each CPE cycle.

The AASW is the accrediting body on behalf of the Australian Government for assessment of accredited Mental Health Social Workers eligible to provide FPS services under the Better Access initiative. More information is available from the AASW's website:

<http://www.aasw.asn.au/whatwedo/medicare-mental-health>