

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Supplementary Budget Estimates 2010-11, 20 October 2010

Question: E10-061

OUTCOME 11: Mental Health

Topic: SOCIAL WORKERS

Written Question on Notice:

Senator Siewert asked:

- a) How many social worker client questionnaires have been sent out?
- b) When were these questionnaires sent out in comparison to the other client questionnaires?
- c) How many private social workers have received questionnaires?

Answer:

- a) Component A.2 of the Better Access evaluation is a study of consumer outcomes focusing specifically on social workers and occupational therapists and their clients. All 899 social workers who had provided services under the Better Access initiative for the 12 month period 1 June 2009 to 31 May 2010 were invited to participate in the study. As at 7 October 2010, 209 social workers (23%) have agreed to participate.

Participating social workers and occupational therapists have been asked to recruit consumers. They have agreed to recruit two to five consumers who have recently completed treatment under Better Access.

To date 158 clients of social workers have completed surveys.

- b) The recruitment of providers and the data collection period for Component A of the evaluation of the Better Access initiative (*A Study of Consumers and their Outcomes*) commenced in September 2009.

In order to provide a complete and comprehensive picture of the outcomes for consumers under the initiative, an additional study is being undertaken on consumer outcomes focussing specifically on social workers and occupational therapists and their clients under the Better Access initiative. Providers were recruited to the study during September and October 2010.

- c) All 899 social workers approached to participate in the study are providers of private, Medicare subsidised services under the Better Access initiative.