

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Supplementary Budget Estimates 2010-11, 20 October 2010

Question: E10-135

OUTCOME 1: Population Health

Topic: BREAST SCREENING

Hansard page: CA 94

Senator Adams asked:

In relation to the fact that breast screening will be going over to the Commonwealth on 1 July, I have been reading about online booking. You can book everything else online so why can we not book for our screening online? Would you just like to take that on board as a suggestion. The NHS has done quite a lot of work with it and has quite a lot of information about it. It was just something that I wanted to raise to see if that was possible. Why can we not book screening online?

Answer:

Currently BreastScreen Australia services do not have online booking capabilities, however this is an emerging issue in the changing e-health environment and a national system is relevant for consideration during the health reform process.

BreastScreen Australia is implemented at a local level by state and territory governments, supported by funding through the National Healthcare Agreements to deliver services.

Jurisdictions have unique client and business information systems, some of which are currently developing online booking capabilities within these systems for services that they deliver.

Currently women can contact their local BreastScreen Australia service to make a booking on the national 132050 number, for the cost of a local call. Each call is answered by the relevant local state and territory BreastScreen service, who ask women questions such as 'Do you currently have any symptoms?', prior to scheduling the appointment. Women with breast symptoms are advised to make an appointment with their GP for investigation and referral.