

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Supplementary Budget Estimates 2010-11, 20 October 2010

Question: E10-159

OUTCOME 4: Aged Care and Population Ageing

Topic: HEALTH REFORM

Hansard Page: CA 39

Senator Fierravanti-Wells asked:

In the national hospitals networks and the primary care networks that were talked about, what has happened with aged care?

Answer:

The following provides an update against the measures in Stream 3 of the Implementation Plan – A National Health and Hospitals Network for Australia’s future – Delivering the reforms.

Improved access to primary health care for people in aged care

- The level of the incentive payments made to GPs who provide services to residents of aged care facilities were increased from 1 July 2010.
- From July 2012, Medicare Locals will administer a flexible funding pool to target gaps in primary health care for older Australians, whether they live independently or in an aged care facility.

Improved viability of Community Care Providers

- On 15 June 2010, the Minister for Ageing signed instruments of determination to increase the community care viability supplement with new rates paid to providers from 1 July 2010.

Consumer directed care

- On 23 July 2010, the Minister for Ageing announced the allocation of 500 Consumer Directed Care places and 200 Consumer Directed Respite Care places nationally.
- A further 500 CDC places will be made available in 2011-12.
- The Department will evaluate the consumer directed packages.

Support Long Stay Older Patients

- Consultation with states and territories has begun, including about eligibility requirements and the method for distributing the 2,000 aged care places.

Increasing Commonwealth aged care funding- HACC Transition

- The Commonwealth is working with participating states and territories to ensure a smooth handover. National Partnership Agreements are being developed to provide funding to continue services in 2011-12. A consultation process with state and territory governments, aged care peak bodies, service providers, and client and carer representatives commenced in capital cities in October 2010.

Aged care one-stop shops

- The Government has commenced consultations in capital cities and regional Australia (except in WA) to seek stakeholders thoughts and ideas about improving information, intake and assessment for the aged care system. These consultations will help shape the model for the new system.

Improved aged care providers business practices

- An industry consultative committee will be established in the near future to guide the development and implementation of a proposed new benchmarking tool for the benefit of aged care providers.

Supporting consumers.

- Strengthened consumer protection for accommodation bonds.

- The Government has commenced a consultation process to seek stakeholder views about the implementation of measures to strengthen the regulation of aged care providers who hold accommodation bonds.

- Improved Aged Care Complaints Investigation Scheme (CIS)

- The Government has commenced key administrative reforms to the CIS including improved processes and training and the development of additional options for resolving complaints. Consultation has commenced with stakeholders regarding a number of the reform measures and will continue throughout the coming months.

Expand Zero Real Interest Loans

- The Government will allocate an additional \$300 million in loans over the next two years.

Release land and accelerate planning approvals for aged care facilities

- This measure will be implemented by working with the states and territories through existing planning reform processes that are being undertaken throughout 2011.
- Consultations are currently being undertaken with relevant stakeholders

Increased access to care through Multi-Purpose Services in rural and remote areas

- Discussions between the Commonwealth and state and territory governments around the implementation plans for this activity are expected to commence once an appropriate National Partnership Agreement arrangement is agreed.

Productivity Commission report on Caring for Older Australians

- The initial submission period closed on 31 July 2010 with 487 submissions received.
- A draft report was released by the Commission on 21 January 2011, with the final report to be provided in June 2011.