

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Supplementary Budget Estimates 2010-2011, 20 October 2010

Question: E10-262

OUTCOME 3: Access to Medical Services

Topic: ARTHRITIS

Written Question on Notice

Senator Fierravanti-Wells asked:

In February, Estimates hearings were told that rheumatologists had lodged an application for a new MBS item - what has been the result of that application?

Answer:

A full application from the Australian Rheumatology Association (ARA) was received on 21 April 2010 seeking two new consultation items that involve joint injections.

It has taken longer than previously envisaged to assess the ARA application, which is the first Quality Framework new listing application under active assessment. As the proposed item has a large evidence base, an external consultant with expertise and experience in health services evaluation and health technology assessment was contracted to undertake the assessment.

The draft assessment protocol was available on the Medical Benefits Reviews Task Group website for public comment from 25 October 2010 to 5 November 2010. Stakeholders were notified about this. The detailed assessment will commence once the assessment protocol is finalised on 12 November 2010.

The application, assessment protocol, assessment report, evaluation plan and proposed schedule fee will be considered by the proposed MBS Quality Framework Expert Advisory Committee early in 2011.

If the evidence results in a positive funding recommendation then it is expected that the outcome will be considered by Government in the 2011-12 Budget process.