

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Supplementary Budget Estimates 2010-11, 20 October 2010

Question: E10-318

OUTCOME 5: Primary Care

Topic: GP SUPER CLINICS

Written Question on Notice

Senator Fierravanti-Wells asks:

- a) Will a planned super clinic in Mackay compete with a clinic under development from the private sector?
- b) Given that super clinics are to have community support how does that requirement equate with the comments of David Farlow spokesman for the Mackay Medical Staff Association who says - and I quote - "We are against this new government super clinic because one is already being developed by a local doctor and there is no reason to have two in the town. It would be better for the government to consult with the local doctors and the community and reallocate the money to ensure we retain the specialists' services?"

Answer:

- a) Mackay is a District of Workforce Shortage for general practice. It is the expectation of the Australian Government that GP Super Clinics will build on existing primary health care services and enhance, rather than compete with these services. Linkages between GP Super Clinics and local health services, including general practices, are encouraged and it is intended that GP Super Clinics will integrate with local programs and initiatives. There will also be opportunities for GP Super Clinics and existing health services to develop partnership approaches to local health service planning and co-ordination.

Opportunities may also exist for existing health services to receive outreach services for patients, or participate in arrangements that assist patients to access previously unavailable services through the GP Super Clinic, before being referred back to their existing health practitioner. Such co-operative arrangements have the potential to make effective use of our scarce health workforce.

- b) As per her announcement of 28 October 2010, the Minister has decided to undertake a local consultation in Mackay. This process will provide the community and stakeholders with an opportunity to discuss with the Department the shape of their new GP Super Clinic and tailor it to meet the needs of the area.

The final consultation timeline is under development and further details will be available in the coming weeks. It is anticipated that local consultation meetings will be held over the next six months.