

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Supplementary Budget Estimates 2010-11, 20 October 2010

Question: E10-322

OUTCOME 5: Primary Care

Topic: STRATHPINE GP SUPER CLINIC

Written Question on Notice

Senator Fierravanti-Wells asked:

Answers from the last estimates hearing indicate that three Overseas Trained Doctors have exemptions to work at the Strathpine GP Super Clinic and that other practices in Strathpine have been granted approval to employ OTDs.

- a) What are the five GP practices in Strathpine that have been granted exemptions to employ OTDs?
- b) Identify by name and location?
- c) How many practices in Strathpine have had applications to employ an OTD rejected - name and identify locations of these practices?
- d) Is it correct that the Strathpine Clinic opened on January 29 this year?
- e) How many patients were treated at the Strathpine clinic within its first month of operation?
- f) As of February 25 this year was there three Overseas Trained Doctors working at the Strathpine Clinic?
- g) On what date was the first Overseas Trained Doctor employed at the Strathpine Clinic?
- h) On what dates were subsequent Overseas Trained Doctors employed?
- i) On what date did the Strathpine Clinic apply for exemptions under the Health Insurance Act to employ Overseas Trained Doctors?
- j) On what date was the exemption granted by the Department?
- k) The Strathpine Clinic was granted special exemptions to employ Overseas Trained Doctors even though it was not in a District of Workforce Shortage because it said a substantial proportion of its patients would be indigenous, from lower socio-economic groups or were drawn from locations that have a DWS classification - how many of the patients treated at this clinic are indigenous Australians, from lower socio-economic groups or are drawn from Districts of Workforce?
- l) If unable to provide figures how then does the department know that a "substantial proportion" of patients are indigenous, from a lower socio-economic group or were from a District of Workforce Shortage?
- m) (Depending on the dates provided) - How was it known within a month of this clinic opening that a "substantial proportion" of patients would be indigenous, from a lower socio-economic group or from a District of Workforce Shortage?

Answers:

a and b)

The name and location of the five medical practices that have received approval to employ overseas trained doctors (OTDs) in the Strathpine area are:

- Skin Scan, 480 Gympie Road, Strathpine QLD 4500;
- A Mother-Baby Hub, 429 Gympie Road, Strathpine, QLD, 4500;
- Strathpine 7 Day Clinic, Cnr Gympie Road & South Pine Road, Strathpine, QLD 4500;
- The Strathpine Family Medical Centre, 10a/1 Bells Pocket Road, Strathpine QLD 4500; and
- Strathpine GP Super Clinic, 328 Gympie Road, Strathpine QLD, 4500.

c) Two medical practices located in Strathpine have had applications to employ OTDs rejected. These practices are:

- the Medicross Medical Centre, 130-134 Gympie Road, Strathpine QLD 4500; and
- the Strathpine GP Super Clinic, 328 Gympie Road, Strathpine QLD, 4500

d) The Strathpine GP Super Clinic commenced operations on 11 January 2010. The Clinic was formally opened by Minister Roxon on 29 January 2010.

e) Information regarding patient service numbers is confidential under the secrecy provisions (Section 130) of the *Health Insurance Act 1973* as it would provide activity and billing information for individual medical practices.

f, g and h)

The Department is unable to confirm if exemptions under section 19AB of the *Health Insurance Act 1973* (the Act) to allow overseas trained doctors to practise at the Strathpine GP Super Clinic have resulted in actual employment.

The Department is not responsible for employment contracts between the GP Super Clinics and the medical practitioners employed at these locations, and does not receive advice regarding the start date of medical practitioners.

i) The Strathpine GP Super Clinic applied to the Department for approval to employ overseas trained doctors through the preliminary assessment of district of workforce shortage (PADWS) application process on 11 May 2009.

j) The Department granted PADWS approval to the Strathpine GP Super Clinic to employ four overseas trained doctors on 5 June 2009.

k, l and m)

The Department does not collect patient data for the GP Super Clinics or any other medical practice. The Strathpine GP Super Clinic was granted a PADWS to employ overseas trained doctors based on evidence provided to the Department within the original PADWS application. In addition, the Department considered Australian Bureau of Statistics data contained within the Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas 2006 as part of the PADWS application process. Strathpine is classified as an area of lower socio-economic advantage.