

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Supplementary Budget Estimates 2010-11, 20 October 2010

Question: E10-357

OUTCOME 4: Aged Care and Population Ageing

Topic: NURSE PRACTITIONERS

Written Question on Notice

Senator Fierravanti-Wells asked:

This measure provides \$18.7 million:

- a) What consultation has the Department undertaken with stakeholders on the implementation of this measure?
- b) Who and when?
- c) What concerns have been raised by stakeholders in these consultations?
- d) How will the projects be funded under this measure be evaluated?
- e) Will the requirements under new Nurse Practitioner (NP) legislation (which stipulates that nurse practitioners will have access to Medicare and the PBS only when they have a collaborative arrangement with a doctor in place) be imposed on all nurse practitioners involved in projects funded through this measure?
- f) What other requirements will be put in place to ensure that the nursing homes residents' doctors (including their general practitioner) will be kept informed of the care and health status of their patients by nurse practitioners?
- g) Are nurse practitioners required under national registration to undertake continuous professional development? Are CDP courses available in Australia at this time for nurse practitioners? If not, what steps will the Department be taking to ensure that nurse practitioners employed under these projects have ongoing professional development?
- h) How many nurse practitioners are currently registered and therefore potentially available to provide services under this program across Australia at this time? Of these, how many are qualified in specific fields of practice relevant to the care of aged care patients?
- i) Is this measure on track to commence within the announced timeframe?

Answer:

- a) The Department has consulted with the Aged Care Workforce Committee on implementation of this measure. The Committee comprises key aged care stakeholders.
- b) The Aged Care Workforce Committee discussed this measure at its meetings on 15 June 2010 and 13 October 2010.

- c) Aged care stakeholders have seen this measure as an opportunity to look practically at how nurse practitioners could operate in an aged care context.
- d) The Department will appoint a national evaluator.
- e) All Nurse Practitioner projects will be required to comply with relevant legislation.
- f) All Nurse Practitioner projects will be required to comply with relevant legislation.
- g) The Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia requires Nurse Practitioners to complete 20 hours of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for registration as a nurse and a further 10 hours for their endorsement. The Board's website sets out the range of activities that count towards CPD.
- h) The Australian Health Practitioner Registration Agency commenced on 1 July 2010. Data on currently registered Nurse Practitioners is not available at this time.
- i) Yes.