

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Supplementary Budget Estimates 2010-11, 20 October 2010

Question: E10-415

OUTCOME 5: Primary Care

Topic: GP SUPER CLINICS

Written Question on Notice

Senator Colbeck asked:

- a) How many tenders were submitted for the operation of the Devonport GP Super Clinic?
- b) When was a decision made to award the contract to the successful operators?
- c) When was the contract signed with the operator of the Devonport GP Superclinic?
- d) What was the original contracted opening date?
- e) Was there any delay? If so, why?
- f) What conditions were placed within the contract with respect to opening hours and bulk billing?
- g) From where did the Minister and Mr Sidebottom's obtain advice to make that statement of 9 April 2009 that the clinic would be open until 10.30pm each night?
- h) How is the GP Super Clinic 'easing the burden' on the Mersey Hospital Emergency Department when it is not operating extended hours?
- i) What measures does the Department use to measure this?

Answer:

- a) Three.
- b) 10 March 2009.
- c) 9 April 2009.
- d) As defined in the Funding Agreement, the date of practical completion was 31 May 2010.
- e) Yes. Poor weather conditions and the need to obtain and analyse soil samples delayed construction.
- f) The Funding Agreement is consistent with the GP Super Clinics Guidelines which state that GP Super Clinics will provide accessible, culturally appropriate and affordable care to their patients. Decisions as to which and how many patients are bulk billed and operating hours are determined by the owner/operator of the clinic as is generally the case for privately operated General Practices.

- g) The applicant originally intended that the Devonport GP Super Clinic would be open to 10:30pm every night. Once opened, however, the Devonport GP Super Clinic operator found that there was insufficient demand for appointments after 6:30pm. If demand changes and extended opening hours become viable, the practice will revisit its operating hours.
- h) For a number of years, practices in the area have not taken on new patients, putting additional pressure on the Mersey Hospital Emergency Department. Since becoming a GP Super clinic, the practice has been able to accept new patients where other practices in the area do not. In addition, the Devonport GP Super clinic provides a service where most clients can make a same-day appointment.
- i) An Evaluation Framework is being developed by the Department to assess the program against its objectives, namely:
- to provide well integrated multidisciplinary patient centred care;
 - to be responsive to local community needs and priorities, including the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and older Australians in Residential Aged Care Facilities and community based settings;
 - to provide accessible, culturally appropriate and affordable care to their patients;
 - to support preventive care, including promotion of healthy lifestyles, addressing risk factor and lifestyle modification to prevent chronic disease and improving early detection and management of chronic disease;
 - to demonstrate efficient and effective use of information technology;
 - to provide a working environment and conditions which attract and retain their workforce;
 - to be centres of high quality best practice care;
 - to operate with viable, sustainable and efficient business models;
 - to support the future primary care workforce; and
 - to integrate with local programs and initiatives.