

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Supplementary Budget Estimates 2011-2012, 19 October 2011

Question: E11-104

OUTCOME 1: Population Health

Topic: THALIDOMIDE

Written Question on Notice

Senator Boyce asked:

Does the minister know what safety protocols are currently in place to ensure there are no adverse effects in patients who are administered thalidomide?

Answer:

Thalidomide is available under a restricted distribution program known as the “i-access” program. The current sponsor of thalidomide, Celgene Pty Ltd, will only supply thalidomide if the prescriber, patient and dispensing pharmacist, agree to participate in the “i-access” program which is designed to ensure that pregnant women are not exposed to the drug. This program involves close monitoring and control of the use and distribution of thalidomide.