

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Supplementary Budget Estimates 2011-2012, 19 October 2011

Question: E11-160

OUTCOME 10: Health System Capacity and Quality

Topic: MIDWIVES INITIATIVE

Written Question on Notice

Senator Di Natale asked:

Has the Department taken any steps to establish a process via COAG or another mechanism to develop a nationally consistent scheme for granting hospital visiting access to privately practicing midwives?

Answer:

The Australian Government is working closely with the state and territory governments to implement the National Maternity Services Plan (the Plan), which was endorsed by all Health Ministers on 12 November 2010. Under this Plan, the development of consistent approaches to the provision of clinical privileging within public maternity services for eligible midwives is a specific action for the states.

Considerable work has commenced at a jurisdictional level to develop these arrangements, with active sharing of progress in individual jurisdictions occurring through the Maternity Services Inter Jurisdictional Committee, an Australian Health Ministers Advisory Council sub-committee. However, these arrangements are complex and will take some time to finalise.

The Australian Government will continue to work with all jurisdictions as they develop these arrangements, recognising that they will be working within their own policy environment and in response to local issues.