

Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES - 18 OCTOBER 2012 ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Human Services Portfolio

Topic: Social Work Services

Question reference number: HS 63

Senator: Siewert

Type of question: Written question

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 7 November 2012

Number of pages: 2

Question:

- a) How many Social Work appointments are scheduled face-to-face and via Centrelink Call for each month from 1 April 2012?
- b) How many social workers are currently employed by Centrelink?
- c) Provide a breakdown of data collected via the Social Work Information System (SWIS).

Answer:

- a) The table below presents the scheduled face-to-face and call appointments made for Social Workers for each month from 1 April 2012.

Month	All scheduled appointments Face to Face and Call
April 2012	3,028
May 2012	3,667
June 2012	4,096
July 2012	3,555
August 2012	4,792
September 2012	3,660
October 2012	3,563
Total	26,361

Scheduled appointments comprised 14 per cent of total Social Work referrals over the period 1 April 2012 to 31 October 2012.

- b) As at 28 September 2012, 702 Social Workers were employed with the Department of Human Services in Social Work services.

- c) The Social Work Information System (SWIS) is a mechanism that records and reports on the breadth of Social Work activities. These activities include case work and non-case work activities.

SWIS records and stores case work information, including:

- customer demographics;
- referral source;
- referral issues (reasons why customers are referred to Social Workers);
- contact type (e.g. office interview, phone interview);
- entitlement decision (where appropriate, whether a customer's claim/review is granted / rejected / not pursued or the recommendation that is put forward by the Social Worker);
- social work intervention (what service was provided by the Social Worker to the customer);
- referral out (if the customer is referred out, what type of agency they are referred to); and
- outcome of the contact with the Social Worker.

SWIS records and stores non case work information including:

- participation in professional supervision, professional development and continuing professional education; and
- community engagement activities.

SWIS includes a system to write and store confidential Social Work reports on a range of delegated and non-delegated decisions made by Social Workers. Critically, SWIS is designed to accurately reflect and record Social Work interventions with vulnerable and at risk customers.