

## **Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee**

### **SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES - 18 OCTOBER 2012 ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE**

#### **Human Services Portfolio**

**Topic:** Electronic Medicare Cards

**Question reference number:** HS 140

**Senator:** McKenzie

**Type of question:** Written question

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

**Number of pages:** 1

**Question:**

Constituents have contacted my office with concerns that under the new 'cashless' Medicare refunds onto credit cards are taking 10 days to hit customer accounts. What assessment has been made of current practice? What changes are under consideration to allow customers to access their refunds in a timely fashion?

**Answer:**

Medicare refunds are not made to credit cards.

Customers have three options regarding their Medicare refunds when they attend a Department of Human Services' Service Centre. They can receive their payment through Credit EFTPOS which transfers the money to a debit card, through Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) to a customer's nominated bank account or via a cheque payment that can be cashed at major banks.

Payment by Credit EFTPOS and cheque is immediate. Payment by EFT takes one to two days depending on the customer's financial service provider; the majority of customers do receive their rebate within one day.

A review was undertaken after implementation of electronic payment options to replace cash. The number of complaints received was very small.