

Senate Community Affairs Committee
ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
SOCIAL SERVICES PORTFOLIO

2013-14 Supplementary Estimates Hearings

Outcome Number: 8

Question No: 412

Topic: ANAO Audits

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Polley asked:

I refer to page 236 of the annual report which states that the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) has tabled a report involving aged care responsibilities. The report entitled “Managing Aged Care Complaints” examined the implementation and ongoing management of the Aged Care Complaints Scheme. Two recommendations were provided – one was aimed at improving access to the Scheme for isolated care recipients and the second at increasing the level of confidence in feedback obtained from surveys of customer satisfaction with the complaints process. Could the Department please provide information about progress against these recommendations?

Answer:

The ANAO made two recommendations as a result of the audit of the Aged Care Complaints Scheme (the Scheme):

1. Improving access to the Scheme for socially isolated care recipients, given they generally do not have someone available to represent them in a complaint.
2. Increasing the level of confidence in feedback obtained from surveys of customer satisfaction with aged care complaints processes.

The Scheme has responded to the ANAO’s recommendations:

1. Improving Scheme access for socially isolated people

The department has engaged with a number of stakeholders to identify options for working to ensure socially isolated care recipients have appropriate access to the Scheme. Stakeholders included peak bodies, service providers that focus on socially isolated groups, community providers and Latrobe University - Rural Aged Care Research.

A number of projects have been initiated to target the socially isolated. These include:

- targeting intermediaries such as ACAT assessors, public guardians, the Community Visitors Scheme (CVS) and advocacy groups;
- participating at special audience conferences;
- developing Scheme resources for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities;
- developing translated resources to reach Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) audiences;
- utilising Australian Government communication channels such as targeting veterans through Department of Veteran’s Affairs (DVA) and aged pensioners via Centrelink;
- distributing Scheme brochures to public libraries;

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- increasing Scheme awareness among rural and remote stakeholders such as Rural and Regional Health Australia, the NT Department of Health, the National Rural Health Alliance and Health Consumers of Rural and Remote Australia.
2. Increasing confidence in the feedback obtained from customer satisfaction surveys
- Roy Morgan Research, a market research agency, was commissioned to provide recommendations on reviewing and refining the questionnaire and process of dissemination to increase response rates.
 - Most of the recommendations provided by Roy Morgan have been implemented, including re-designing the questionnaires and promoting the survey more actively to the target audiences.
 - Consultations on the existing survey and Roy Morgan's recommendations were conducted with the National Aged Care Alliance Complaints Subgroup and the Aged Care Commissioner.