

Senate Community Affairs Committee
ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
SOCIAL SERVICES PORTFOLIO
2013-14 Supplementary Estimates Hearings

Outcome Number: 8

Question No: 417

Topic: Residential Care

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Polley asked:

The Department's Annual Report, at page 94, indicated that the Aged Care Funding Instrument used to set care subsidies in residential care would be changed. What changes have occurred? What outcomes are you seeing? What growth has there been in the subsidies paid through ACFI? Does the ACFI Behaviour Domain reflect additional support for those with symptoms of dementia?

Answer:

As stated on page 94 of the 2012-13 Annual Report for the Department of Health and Ageing, during 2012-13 changes were made to the Aged Care Funding Instrument (ACFI) to better match funding levels with the care needs of residents. These changes were designed to bring future growth in aged care subsidies back to long term trend rates of between 2-3 per cent per annum above indexation.

From 1 July 2012, a range of changes to the ACFI were introduced including a one-off price reduction of 1.6% to ACFI subsidy rates and specific changes to questions within the tool. Further changes to improve the evidence requirements within the ACFI were introduced on 1 February and 1 July 2013.

The ACFI Monitoring Group was established in August 2012 to monitor the impact of the changes, and to address any unintended outcomes. Membership of the Group includes representatives from aged care providers, consumers and people who work in aged care.

During 2012-13, ACFI subsidies grew by 3.8 per cent. It is expected that in 2013-14, subsidies will grow by 3.2 per cent above indexation.

Funding is provided under the Cognitive and Behaviour domain in the ACFI to support the residents care needs in respect to verbal behaviour, physical behaviour, cognition, wandering and depression. The Dementia and Severe Behaviours Supplement, which was introduced in residential care on 1 August 2013, provides funding for those residents with severe behavioural and psychological symptoms associated with dementia or other conditions. Funding is provided on top of the basic subsidy delivered through the ACFI in recognition that it does not fully capture the cost of care needs of residents exhibiting these severe and complex behaviours.