

Senate Community Affairs Committee
ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
SOCIAL SERVICES PORTFOLIO
2014-15 Supplementary Estimates Hearings

Outcome Number: 3- Ageing

Question No: 411

Topic: Aged Person - Homelessness

Hansard Page: Written

Senator McLucas asked:

Older people who were homeless or at risk of becoming homelessness were identified as potential 'vulnerable clients' within the existing HACC program in Service Group 2 Report of the Key Directions for the Commonwealth Home Support Discussion Paper.

However the Report did not provide any further commentary or analysis.

- a. Has the Government commissioned separate research on this issue?
- b. If so who is conducting the research?
- c. Will it be publicly available?
- d. If not what is the Government using to inform policy making in relation to older people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless?
- e. What is the Government doing to ensure access to the Aged Care Gateway by older people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless?

Answer:

The Review of HACC Service Group 2 on the *Key Directions for the Commonwealth Home Support Discussion Paper* was significant in providing an evidence base around the service needs of vulnerable clients, including homeless older people, for inclusion in the Discussion Paper on the Commonwealth Home Support Programme.

The Discussion Paper has been publicly released for comment and the Department has received a range of input and comments from the sector that will influence the final directions of the Commonwealth Home Support Programme.

The Aged Care Gateway measure included a linking service to assist older vulnerable people with multiple needs to access health, housing, disability, financial and aged care services.

From February to June 2013, the then Department of Health and Ageing engaged KPMG to develop and advise on options for the linking service. This project included consultations across each state and territory. Findings from KPMG's final project report *Development of Evidence Based Options for the Linking Service* were publicly released in August 2013.

Indicators that identify vulnerable people who require linking service support will be included in the Aged Care Gateway's (My Aged Care's) screening and assessment tools. From July 2015 the My Aged Care Contact Centre and Regional Assessment Services (RAS) will operate these tools.

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The RAS will also offer an additional level of tailored linking service support to vulnerable clients to enable their connection to the appropriate support and services to address their complex needs and in doing so facilitate effective access to aged care support. This may include referral to appropriate services such as those currently provided through Assistance with Care and Housing for the Aged Programme, or to drug and alcohol services.