

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

**Outcome Number:** 3- Ageing

**Question No:** 440

**Topic:** Dementia and Severe Behaviours Supplement Replacement

**Hansard Page:** Written

**Senator Polley** asked:

On 31 May 2014 Senator Fifield wrote to the Departmental Secretary confirming that he would terminate the Dementia and Severe Behaviours Supplement (DSBS) and stating that he had agreed to develop both “an interim and ongoing measure that was appropriately targeted”.

- a. Has the Department undertaken any work on developing an “interim” measure? Does the Department intend to undertake any work on developing an “interim” measure?
- b. Has the Minister provided any further guidance on the development of an “interim” measure?

**Answer:**

The Minister’s letter of 31 May 2014 followed advice provided to the Minister that design of a new payment would take several years, and it may therefore be appropriate in the interim to fund alternative projects to deliver support to people with severe and extreme Behavioural and Psychological Symptoms of Dementia.

A meeting with former Dementia and Veterans’ Supplements Working Group members and expert clinicians on 19 June 2014 acknowledged that there were challenges in redeveloping the Dementia and Severe Behaviours Supplement (DSBS).

Based on feedback from this meeting and discussions with other stakeholders, the Minister decided it would be more useful to examine a broader range of long-term options in the context of dementia care.

As a result, the Forum, *Dementia Care - Core Business for Aged Care*, involving relevant stakeholders was held on 11 September 2014 to consider strategies to improve and promote better practice dementia care in both residential care and care in the home. The Forum Working Group provided the Assistant Minister for Social Services, Senator the Hon Mitch Fifield with a report on actionable outcomes on 31 October 2014. This report, *Ministerial Dementia Forum – Options Paper* was released on 17 December 2014 and is currently being considered by the Government.