

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Supplementary Budget Estimates 2015 - 2016, 21 October 2015

Ref No: SQ15-000716

OUTCOME: 6 – Private Health

Topic: Prostheses List for Bio Engineering

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Senator: Di Natale, Richard

Question:

Prostheses list for bio engineering – Stryker non-implantable items that are incredibly effective for removing blood clots but not listable due to existing protocols –

- a) Will this be changed?
- b) What is the impact of this protocol issue on health system?

Answer:

a) and b)

The criteria for listing prostheses on the Prostheses List do not include non-implantable devices unless they are:

- integral to implanting a specific surgically implanted prosthesis; or
- essential to the correct functioning of a surgically implanted prosthesis; or
- an insulin infusion pump; or
- an implantable cardiac event recorder; or
- a cardiac remote/home monitoring device.

Private health insurers are not precluded by law from funding medical devices not listed on the Prostheses List. They can fund these items through contractual arrangements with hospitals or through ex gratia payments to members.

These devices may also be available for patients in public hospitals or for self-funded private patients.

The Australian Government is undertaking a number of reviews aimed at ensuring that consumers can access affordable, quality and timely health services into the future.

On 28 October 2015 the Minister for Health, the Hon Sussan Ley MP, announced a consultation process focused on the value of private health insurance for consumers and its long term sustainability.

As part of these consultations, the Department of Health undertook eight roundtables. An issues paper was provided to guide discussion at the roundtables. This issues paper included reference to prostheses listing and pricing. The issues paper is available on the Department's website. The Department is also receiving submissions as part of the consultation process. Submissions are due to the Department by 4 December 2015.

Further details of the consultation process are available from
www.health.gov.au/PHIconsultations2015-16