

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Supplementary Budget Estimates 2015 - 2016, 21 October 2015

Ref No: SQ15-000872

OUTCOME: 11 – Ageing and Aged Care

Topic: Regional Assessment Services

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Senator: Polley, Helen

Question:

Some Regional Assessment Services are provided by organisations that provide aged care services. How is the Government managing the conflict of interest where organisations have responsibility both for determining need and assessing eligibility for services, and the provision of those services?

Answer:

A core tenet of the Regional Assessment Services (RAS) is the separation of assessment from service delivery. The RAS are contractually required to have strict procedures, protocols and other mechanisms in place to assure the separation of assessment from service delivery. RAS contractors must notify the Department of Health immediately if any conflict of interest arises, or appears likely to arise, and take steps to resolve the conflict.

The Department will closely monitor the referral practice of each organisation. The Department recognises that in some circumstances, for example in regions where availability of appropriate services is limited, self-referral may be acceptable.