

**Senate Community Affairs Committee**

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

**Supplementary Budget Estimates 2015 - 2016, 21 October 2015**

**Ref No:** SQ15-000876

**OUTCOME:** 11 – Ageing and Aged Care

**Topic:** Consumer Directed Care

**Type of Question:** Written Question on Notice

**Senator:** Polley, Helen

**Question:**

On 8 August 2015, the ABC reported that an estimated 10,000 home care recipients were told by their care providers that under new consumer directed care packages they would no longer have enough funds to pay for the services they received, creating a "care gap" for some clients.

The April 2015 KPMG report "Formative evaluation of the home care packages program" , found that 75 per cent of providers indicated that the budget available for home care packages was insufficient to meet consumer needs.

The Department then established a national CDC hotline to handle transition complaints.

- a) What modelling or estimate projections were undertaken on the "care gap" created by transitioning to the CDC model, prior to implementation?
- b) Has any analysis of this "care gap" been undertaken since 1 July 2015?
- c) How many consumers were consulted by KPMG when undertaking the evaluation of home care packages (April 2015)?
- d) Was any analysis of consumer experience undertaken by KPMG? If so, please provide details of the findings.

**Answer:**

Prior to 1 July 2015 the Government did not have access to reliable data to identify the number of consumers receiving cross subsidised services as this information would only have been known by the provider.

Some consumers were receiving extra services while others were missing out on services because their providers were using funding for one client to top up the care of another with more complex care needs. Whilst this was not illegal, it was not in the spirit of the Home Care Package programme which operates under the Aged Care Act and provides subsidy to providers on behalf of individuals.

Since the introduction of the Consumer Directed Care (CDC) Transition Hotline on 1 July 2015, Departmental staff have been working with each individual home care recipient who experienced a reduction in services to satisfactorily resolve their situation. As at 16 October 2015, 109 cases were considered in scope for review.

“The Formative Evaluation of the Home Care Packages Programme – Detailed findings report (April 2015)” reported that 55 consumers and carers were telephone interviewed as part of the evaluation project. This comprised of 31 consumers and 24 carers.

An analysis of consumer experience was conducted by KPMG. The findings are outlined on page 39 of “The Formative Evaluation of the Home Care Packages Programme – Detailed findings report (April 2015)”. The report can be found on the Department of Social Services, Home Care Packages – Reform webpage at <https://www.dss.gov.au/our-responsibilities/ageing-and-aged-care/aged-care-reform/home-care/home-care-packages-reform>.