

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Supplementary Budget Estimates 2015 - 2016, 21 October 2015

Ref No: SQ15-000912

OUTCOME: 11 – Ageing and Aged Care

Topic: Previous Workforce Supplement

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Senator: Polley, Helen

Question:

- a) Please outline any evidence that the funds previously allocated to the Aged Care Workforce Supplement and then used to top up residential aged care supplements, have resulted in improvements in the aged care workforce? Particularly to wages, career development, training etc.
- b) Has this seen an increase in the overall staff to resident ratios?
- c) The sector refers to workforce as being at a critical point. In fact, the Aged care Financing Authority report makes that point. One of the issues raised in the ACFA report is that the National Aged Care Workforce Census and Survey was undertaken in 2012. When the next survey be undertaken?
- d) Has the National Institute for Labour Studies been contracted to begin work on the next one? If not, what is the timeframe set by the Government to begin work, including when you expect to see work begin and when it is likely to be completed?
- e) How much has been budgeted to complete this work? Where are those funds coming from?

Answer:

The Government redirected \$1.5 billion from the Aged Care Workforce Supplement into the general pool of aged care funding over five years from 2013-14. This has reduced red tape as providers have more flexibility in how to use these additional funds to support their workforce.

The Department of Health does not collect information on staff ratios. Under the *Aged Care Act 1997*, aged care providers are responsible for ensuring that there are adequate numbers of appropriately skilled staff to meet the individual care needs of residents.

The next National Aged Care Workforce Census and Survey is planned to go into the field in January 2016.

The National Institute for Labour Studies was contracted on 23 September 2015 to work on the next National Aged Care Workforce Census and Survey. The work is expected to be completed in September 2016 after which a final publication is expected to be published on the Department of Health website.

The amount budgeted to complete this work is \$773,000 (GST exclusive) is coming from the Aged Care Workforce Fund.