

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Supplementary Budget Estimates 2016 - 2017, 19 October 2016

Ref No: SQ16-000544

OUTCOME: 6 - Ageing and Aged Care

Topic: Regional Assessment Services

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Senator: Siewert, Rachel

Question:

What actions has the department taken to ensure that Regional Assessment Services (RAS) are assessing and appropriately referring people of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Background (CALD)?

Answer:

Regional Assessment Services (RAS) contractors are required to offer assessments for low level home support services to all client groups in the regions which they service, including clients with a CALD background. Each potential RAS contractor's ability to meet this requirement was considered carefully before contracts were offered in early 2015.

My Aged Care Regional Assessment Service Guidelines (2015) outline the requirements for the assessment of people with special and significant needs. RAS are expected to assist in achieving equitable access to all assessment services, for groups of people that are identified as having special needs including people from CALD communities.

RAS assessors are required to undertake mandatory training to operate as part of the My Aged Care workforce. This includes aspects of working with diverse client groups. Two elective training units focussing on people with diverse needs and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander awareness are currently under review and expected to be available in early 2017.

RAS contractors may employ a number of procedures to enhance their capacity to undertake assessment for people with diverse needs. The RAS may use bilingual or multilingual staff or the Translation and Interpreting Service when assessing clients who need, or prefer, to use a language other than English. RAS contractors are encouraged to develop relationships with organisations that work with CALD clients, which may include the offer of translation services during an assessment.

The RAS is responsible for any costs incurred to provide interpreter services.