

## Senate Community Affairs Committee

### ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

#### HEALTH PORTFOLIO

#### Supplementary Budget Estimates 2016 - 2017, 19 October 2016

Ref No: SQ16-000708

**OUTCOME:** 6 - Ageing and Aged Care

**Topic:** My Aged Care

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

**Senator:** Polley, Helen

**Question:**

The 2016-17 Budget included an additional \$136.6 million over four years to support the operation of the MyAgedCare contact centre. Can you detail how this funding has and/or will be spent? Can you provide the most up to date annual data for each year since MyAgedCare started detailing: number of enquires, number of calls/enquires that have gone unanswered, average wait-time on the hotline, average time for an enquiry to be resolved, number of complaints received, number of referrals for assessment. Is the Department aware that the telephone contact centre interactions are reportedly causing frustration for consumers? What measures does the Department have in place to ensure that telephone services are adequate? How is the Department monitoring satisfaction with MyAgedCare? Can you provide any data relating to this monitoring? Can you provide a copy of this data, with a comparison to all previous years since My AgedCare started? What proportion of people who are being referred from MyAgedCare for assessment by Regional Assessment Services have diverse backgrounds that mean they have specific needs (CALD, LGBTI, etc)?

**Answer:**

**Can you detail how this funding has and/or will be spent?**

Funding of \$136.6m provided in the 2016-17 Budget will be spent on costs associated with handling the contact centre workload (call and correspondence volumes and service levels). This includes staff and infrastructure to deliver My Aged Care. There are currently more than 450 staff in three sites who deliver the services offered through the My Aged Care contact centre.

**Can you provide the most up to date annual data for each year since MyAgedCare started detailing:**

- **number of enquiries**  
Table 1 below shows the My Aged Care Contact Centre call summary data by financial year since inception. Annual calls volumes are represented as calls offered and calls answered.
- **number of calls/enquiries that have gone unanswered**  
Refer to Table 1 – Unanswered calls
- **average wait-time on the hotline**

Refer to Table 1 – Average wait time (secs)

- **average time for an enquiry to be resolved**

Refer to Table 1 – Average Handling Time (includes call duration and after-call wrap up time)

- **number of complaints received**

Refer to Q3 below.

- **number of referrals for assessment**

Table 2 below shows the number of assessment referrals that have been issued, are accepted, or have been rejected in 2015-16 within My Aged Care. This information is presented by Regional Assessment Service (RAS), Aged Care Assessment Teams (ACATs) and combined total. RAS Services commenced on 1 July 2015 and ACATs transitioned to use the My Aged Care System from February 2016.

**Table 1: My Aged Care Contact Centre Call Summary Data by Financial Year**

	<b>2013-14</b>	<b>2014-15</b>	<b>2015-16</b>
<b>Calls Offered</b>	149,239	161,448	790,443
<b>Calls Answered</b>	146,439	156,304	690,544
<b>Unanswered Calls (= Offered - Answered)</b>	2,800	5,144	99,899*
<b>Average Handling Time (mins)</b>	9.65	8.9	15.59**
<b>Average Speed to Answer (secs)</b>	8.06***	-	139
<b>Average Wait Time (secs)</b>	-	18.78***	-
<b>Average Hold Time (secs)</b>	-	-	82.36***

\*My Aged Care significantly expanded on 1 July 2015, which had a direct impact on operations and unanswered call volumes in the first three months. The percentage of unanswered calls in 2015-16 dropped from 28% in the first quarter to 9% in the last quarter of 2015-16.

\*\* From 1 July 2015, the call centre expanded from an information line only to a registration, screening and referral service. This has appropriately led to an increase in average handling time.

\*\*\*These figures were generated from monthly averages for FY divided by 12, and are therefore averages of averages.

Source: Data for 2013-14 and 2014-15 was derived from monthly reports provided by HealthDirect Australia. Data for 2015-16 supplied by HealthDirect Australia using Siebel as at 5 July 2016.

**Table 2: 2015-16 Number of Referrals to Assessment<sup>^</sup>**

	<b>2015-16</b>
<b>Total Number Issued</b>	<b>320,085</b>
To RAS	210,745
To ACAT	109,340
<b>Total Number Accepted</b>	<b>233,165</b>
By RAS	151,531
By ACAT	81,634
<b>Total Number Rejected</b>	<b>73,008</b>
By RAS	48,802
By ACAT	24,206

<sup>^</sup> Comprehensive assessments were recorded by ACATs using two distinct client management systems during the 2015-16 FY. This is due to the iterative transition of ACATs using legacy client management systems (e.g. ACE – Aged Care Evaluation) to the My Aged Care system between 1 February and 21 March 2016. Table 2 only shows the number of referrals to assessment within My Aged Care and does not include legacy system data.

Source: Data for 2015-16 was drawn from data captured by the contact centre at point of registration. Counts were generated on 1 July 2016 from the Ageing and Aged Care Data Warehouse.

**Q3. Is the Department aware that the telephone contact centre interactions are reportedly causing frustration for consumers? What measures does the Department have in place to ensure that telephone services are adequate?**

From March to September this year, the Department undertook a comprehensive review of the My Aged Care contact centre, analysing processes and behaviours to ensure they aligned with the My Aged Care service expectations. Through this enhancement programme, the Department worked with their delivery partners to change, adjust or remove processes which were hindering or preventing clients from being able to access aged care services.

Improvements were made to a number of processes including:

- reducing the number of referrals from the contact centre to assessors and service providers that had incomplete information;
- additional guidance for the contact centre to ensure appropriate expectation setting with clients would be provided;
- reducing the volume of referrals to service providers for clients where an assessment was yet to occur; and
- improved processes ensuring clients’ privacy was respected whilst also being able to respond to enquiries from those assisting clients access aged care services.

The Department has specific Service Level Agreements within their contract with Healthdirect Australia that the contact centre must meet. These measures include:

- Speed to answer calls;
- Resolution rates of calls and correspondence;
- Call recording rates;
- Contact Centre availability times; and
- Customer satisfaction rates.

**Q4. How is the Department monitoring satisfaction with MyAgedCare? Can you provide any data relating to this monitoring? Can you provide a copy of this data, with a comparison to all previous years since My Aged Care started?**

For the first year of Contact Centre operation, Stellar conducted internal satisfaction surveys which were offered to callers to provide feedback on their experience with the service (Table 3). In July 2014, the My Aged Care Customer Satisfaction survey was delivered by an independent market research company (Australian Market Research) and is available on an opt-in basis. A summary of these results are at Table 4 across financial year quarters for FY 2014/15 and FY 2015/16. Additionally, the Department is continuing with Wave 2 of the My Aged Care evaluation, which looks at the sector (consumers, health professionals, assessors and service providers) satisfaction and awareness of My Aged Care.

**Table 3: 2013-14 My Aged Care Contact Centre Customer Satisfaction Survey Results**

<b>Overall Satisfaction</b>	
Yes - Mostly Satisfied	77%
No - Somewhat Satisfied	23%
<b>Consumer/Client</b>	
Yes - Mostly Satisfied	76%
No - Somewhat Satisfied	24%
<b>Service Provider</b>	
Yes - Mostly Satisfied	76%
No - Somewhat Satisfied	24%

Source: Data based information supplied by HealthDirect Australia

**Table 4:** 2014-15 and 2015-16 AMR My Aged Care Contact Centre Customer Satisfaction Survey Results

<b>Overall Satisfaction</b>	<b>FY 2014/15</b>				<b>FY 2015/16</b>			
	<b>Q1</b>	<b>Q2</b>	<b>Q3</b>	<b>Q4</b>	<b>Q1</b>	<b>Q2</b>	<b>Q3</b>	<b>Q4</b>
<b>Very satisfied</b>	72%	72%	76%	78%	77%	80%	79%	83%
<b>Satisfied</b>	22%	23%	20%	19%	19%	17%	18%	14%
<b>Neutral</b>	3%	2%	2%	0%	2%	1%	2%	1%
<b>Dissatisfied</b>	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
<b>Very dissatisfied</b>	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
<b>Unsure</b>	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%

Source: Data based information supplied by HealthDirect Australia

**Q5. What proportion of people who are being referred from MyAgedCare for assessment by Regional Assessment Services have diverse backgrounds that mean they have specific needs (CALD, LGBTI, etc)?**

My Aged Care does not currently collect reportable information across all diverse needs groups such as LGBTI, Care-leavers or older people who are financially disadvantaged.

My Aged Care however does collect the following:

**Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI)**

The proportion of clients who identified as an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander\* registered in My Aged Care and referred for an assessment by a Regional Assessment Service steadily increased from 1.2 per cent in July 2015 to 2.2 per cent in June 2016. This proportion has steadied during the first quarter of 2016-17 at an average of 1.9 per cent.

**Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD)**

The proportion of clients who are determined as being Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD)\* registered in My Aged Care and referred for an assessment by a Regional Assessment Service steadily increased from 8.2 per cent in July 2015 to 8.7 per cent in June 2016. This proportion increased to 11.0 per cent in the first quarter of 2016-17.

Source: Data extracted from the Ageing and Aged Care Data Warehouse on 9 November 2016.

\* All data regarding My Aged Care clients has been extracted from the Aging and Aged Care Data Warehouse (AACDW). However, the enumeration process for some data is different depending on what information is being collected. For the fields concerning Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islanders and gender, the client self-identifies these characteristics. This means the information is collected direct from the source, and has not been derived.

Within the My Aged Care environment, the *Country of Birth* and *Preferred Language Spoken* fields are used to identify Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) clients. These fields are optional and therefore CALD information presented in this report is derived and not self-identified. The client is asked what their country of birth is and if they speak a language other than English at home. A client's CALD status is then derived in the AACDW based on their responses to these questions.