

Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications

Answers to Senate Estimates Questions on Notice

Supplementary Budget Estimates Hearings November 2014

Communications Portfolio

NBN Co Limited

Question No: 127

Program No. NBN Co

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Non-Conventional Therapies

Senator Ludwig asked:

Since 7 September 2013:

1. Are non-conventional therapies, for staff or ministerial use, able to be provided by the department/agency? (Including, but not limited to: Music Therapy, Hypnosis, Acupuncture, Chiropractic, Homeopathy, Naturopathy, etc) If yes:
 - a) What is the process by which these therapies can be approved?
 - b) Who are they available to?
 - c) Please detail the reasons the therapies able to be provided (e.g. Work Place Agreement, recommended by a report to the department, etc)?
2. Has the department/agency paid for any non-conventional therapy for any Minister or staff?
If yes:
 - a) What therapies have been provided?
 - b) What were they used to treat?
 - c) What was the cost of the therapy?

Answer:

1. Yes, alternative therapies can be included as part of an approved return to work/rehabilitation program to assist with recovery from a workplace injury. This process is described below:
 - a) Following a workplace injury, the event is recorded in the incident management system, and our injury management process commences
 - A discussion is held between the NBN Rehabilitation Manager and employee regarding diagnosis, treatment, timeframes for recovery, amount of treatment and the claims process (including the of lodging a claim).
 - If an employee lodges a claim, Comcare will determine liability and any alternative therapies would be paid for under the claim.
 - The NBN Co Rehabilitation Manager will then consult with the treating practitioner/s and implement a return to work/rehabilitation program.
 - b) All NBN Co staff who are being treated as part of an agreed return to work plan/rehabilitation program.
 - c) Medical recommendations or treatment plans for an injury or illness suffered in the workplace.
2. (a to c). No.