

Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment - Education

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Budget Estimates 2014-2015**

Outcome 1 - Early Childhood Education and Care

Department of Education Question No. ED0271_15

Senator Xenophon provided in writing.

Question

Child Care for isolated families

1. For approximately 280 families living in isolated locations, their only access to early childhood education for their four year olds is via state delivered distance education programs. These families are not able to receive the Assistance for Isolated Children's Distance Education allowance to assist with meeting the out of pocket and start-up costs of delivering and administering the program to their children, as the allowance only applies to the formal schooling years.
- a. Is any assistance available to these families to assist in covering the cost of care?
 - b. Are they eligible for the child care rebate or other assistance, even though they cannot enrol in a centre due to their isolated location?
 - c. Has there been any discussion with state departments to ensure these families have access to the support they need?

Answer

The Minister for Social Services, the Hon Kevin Andrews MP, has portfolio responsibility for the Assistance for Isolated Children's Scheme.

To be able to receive the Child Care Rebate families need to have children in Child Care Benefit approved child care, which may include a family day care service.

The Budget Based Funded (BBF) Programme also enables approximately 340 child care and early learning and school age care services to operate in locations where the market would otherwise be unviable, including mobile services that operate in remote and very remote areas.