

**Senate Standing Committee on Education Employment and Workplace
Relations**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Additional Estimates 2011-2012**

Outcome 1 - Early Childhood Education and Child Care

DEEWR Question No. EW1005_12

Senator Nash provided in writing.

Question

Childcare Crisis as Fees Set to Soar

"Refer to Herald Sun story 'Childcare crisis as fees set to soar'. The story refers to a Herald Sun investigation that found unprecedented fee rises of up to \$25 a day because of mandatory changes to staff numbers from 1 Jan 2012. The new regulations will require one staff member to care for four children up to two years old – up from the current ration of five. The Childcare Centres Association of Victoria is also quoted saying most private centres would shed child places rather than burden families with significant fee increases. • Is the dept monitoring the impact of the changes, increased fees and cuts to childcare places on families in regional areas? • If so, how will this be done and will the findings be released, and how often?
<http://www.heraldsun.com.au/news/more-news/childcare-crisis-as-fees-set-to-soar/story-fn7x8me2-1226211751820>"

Answer

The Department monitors the cost of child care through fees reported by services through the Mychild website, and its administrative systems. Data on the weekly cost of care is published by the Productivity Commission in the annual Report on Government Services (RoGS) publication. Data for 2011 was published in RoGS 2012 on 31 January 2012.

The Department releases the *Child Care Update* publication on a regular basis. These publications show that the number of children using long day care in Victoria increased by 13.7% between the June quarter 2010 and the June quarter 2011, in comparison, the national increase was 10.8%.

The most recent Child Care Update publication is available on the Department's website at the following link:

<http://www.deewr.gov.au/Earlychildhood/Resources/Pages/home.aspx>

The Department monitors vacancy information which is reported weekly by services and published on Mychild. Analysis of vacancy information is published in the Child Care Vacancies Quarterly Snapshot, which is published four times a year. Long day care data in this publication is presented by state and remoteness category.

The most recent *Child Care Vacancies Quarterly Snapshot, June 2011*, is available on the Department's website at the following link:

<http://www.deewr.gov.au/Earlychildhood/Resources/Pages/ChildCareVacanciesQuarterlySnapshot.aspx>