

Senate Finance and Public Administration Standing Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
BUDGET ESTIMATES – 29 MAY 2008

Human Services Portfolio



Department/Agency: Medicare Australia
Outcome/Output Group: Outcome 1/Output 1.1
Topic: PBS Online

Senator: Brown
Question reference number: HS32

Type of question: Written
Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 11 July 2008

Question:

There was a ANAO report in 2004-05 that went into the 'Administration of Health Care Cards' that touched upon the PBS Online initiative that sought to improve entitlement verification which cost the Commonwealth up to \$78 million a year.

HS32a: Can you fill the Senate in on the progress of that initiative?

HS32b: Was there a specific budget measure underpinning that? When was it announced?

Answer:

HS32a: PBS Online, which enables community pharmacists to access real time assessment to the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme, also includes real time concessional entitlement verification. Currently, 97.2 per cent of Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme claims are processed through PBS Online.

HS32b: A budget measure was announced in the 2003-04 Federal Budget to improve the entitlement checking of concessional benefits payable under the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme program to ensure these benefits are provided only to those who are eligible to receive them. This measure was called Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme – Improved Entitlement Validation of Concession Cards.

Number of pages: 1