

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES HEARING: 13 FEBRUARY 2012

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(AE12/0416) Program 4.3: Offshore Asylum Seeker Management

Senator Boyce asked:

The Department says it is “fully conscious of meeting all of our human rights expectations, and that includes provision of the full range of health care” and again; “we certainly are conscious of the needs of any clients who have disabilities in terms of provision of proper facilities.” However the Department also admits that, “there has not been an audit” into whether all your detention facilities are compliant with Australian disability standards. As well, when asked about whether an NDIS report that recommended asylum seekers be included in the National Disability Insurance Scheme had been discussed with FaHCSIA no one had a clue. How do you reconcile the apparent gap between words and actions?

Answer:

All people entering immigration detention undergo a health examination conducted by health professionals who are registered with appropriate professional bodies or authorities. This and any subsequent examinations inform an ongoing health care plan for managing any significant health conditions identified, including those associated with a disability.

Where required, clients, including those who may have a disability, are referred for further specialist assessment, diagnosis and support. This information informs client placement in the detention network, or in community detention if appropriate.

A number of detention facilities have disability access and clients needing this access are placed in these locations.

Information on detention facility compliance with disability standards is given in the department’s response to the Committee’s question on notice 417.

Information on FaHCSIA consultation with NDIS stakeholders is given in the department’s response to the Committee’s question on notice 310.