

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 24 MAY 2011

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(BE11/0260) Program 4.3: Offshore Asylum Seeker Management

Senator Cash asked:

What type of services are provided?

Answer:

The Australian Red Cross manages the care and welfare of unaccompanied minors in community detention through a range of sub-contracted arrangements for live in care.

While in community detention unaccompanied minors have access to:

- health services, including mental health counselling;
- schools or other education services;
- computer and internet; and
- other activities such as sports.

The unaccompanied minors have their food and other living expenses paid for and receive a small personal allowance for purchase of personal goods.

Red Cross, or its subcontractors, provide 24 hour live in care support for unaccompanied minors. Case management support continues to be provided by the Department. Health services are accessed through the Department's contracted health provider, International Health and Medical Services.

With respect to unaccompanied minors in immigration detention facilities, Life Without Barriers is contracted by the Department to provide care and support services and to act as independent observers.

Independent observers attend formal interviews held between unaccompanied minors and the Department and agencies such as the Australian Federal Police. They provide pastoral or physical support to the unaccompanied minors throughout the interview process.

Care and support services provided by Life Without Barriers include:

- assisting in the implementation of programs and activities for clients;
- providing youth forums which educate unaccompanied minors on a range of topics; and
- assisting in ensuring that the clients' recreational, emotional and spiritual needs are met.