

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 21-22 MAY 2012

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(BE12/0228) Program 1.1: Visa and Migration

Senator Boyce asked:

As a result of a Freedom of Information application abridged copies of discussions between DoHA and the Department of Immigration and Citizenship have just been released. Apparently DIAC expressed 'some concerns' 'about the comprehensiveness of the advice provided by DoHA. What was that about, what was it specifically in relation to and what is Doha's response to such criticism? (Document reference) 'DIAC indicated that there had also been some concerns raised internally about the comprehensiveness of the advice provided by DoHA - with DIAC seeking additional information where required so that it is able to ensure transparency and develop "evidence-based policy". For example, DIAC's Chief Medical Officer has sought additional information in the context of advice about prejudice of access issues (to be discussed at the next FAS level meeting). Additional information will also be sought shortly in relation to the practice of charging for TB treatment, given concerns that no national approach is in place in terms of TB treatment.'

Answer:

The specific query on which DIAC was seeking additional information was in relation to prejudice to access for certain items, in particular knee and hip joint replacements and dialysis. In response to DIAC concerns, DoHA investigated further and provided more detailed advice on the specific questions in March 2011.