

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY QUESTION ON NOTICE

Department of Health

Senate Select Committee on COVID-19

Australian Government's Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic

21 August 2020

PDR Number: IQ20-000564

Care provided by CHSP

Spoken

Hansard Page number: 10

Senator: Rachel Siewert

Question:

Dr Murphy: I'm saying the concern and the intent of the policy were to make sure that those people who had a close direct-care interaction, frontline interaction, with the recipient who were most at risk of contracting the virus and therefore most likely to be concerned about coming to work. The retention bonus was targeted at those staff to get them to come to work.

Senator SIEWERT: In fact, you've just articulated that some providers provide both home care and CHSP. So some of those workers for those organisations—and local government providers in Victoria provide a lot of this care—are getting the retention bonus if they're a worker providing a home-care package but not if they're providing CHSP?

Mr Lye: That's right. That's the distinction.

Senator SIEWERT: Can you take that on notice, so I don't use up all my time. It would be useful for me to understand what you see as the care that's provided from the CHSP.

Clearly, I have a different understanding than some of the workers I've been talking to about what they do. My understanding is a lot of them come in direct contact with a person—not just gardening with an older person—and could also provide a risk during this COVID pandemic.

Mr Lye: Yes, we can take that on notice.

Answer:

The Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP) provides a range of services for clients at their home. This includes services in which there is often minimal direct contact with clients, such as home maintenance, meals delivery, and domestic assistance.

Clinical services delivered under the program tend to be less intensive than direct care delivered under the Home Care Packages program, which caters for clients with more complex needs.

CHSP providers were eligible for the Workforce Retention Bonus Payment announced by the Australian Government on 20 March 2020 where they were also an approved provider of home care packages or residential aged care, and could receive the payment in respect of staff delivering services under those programs.