

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Additional Estimates 2010-11, 23 February 2011

Question: E11-133

OUTCOME 5: Primary Care

Topic: MEDICARE PROVIDER NUMBERS

Written Question on Notice

Senator Fierravanti-Wells asked:

The 2010 Review of the Medicare Provider Number Legislations contains a number of recommendations. Recommendation 6.2 on page 5 requires co-ordination between the Divisions of General Practice and the Medical Deputising Services. This has not occurred but is this what the new Medicare Locals are meant to do?

(Recommendation 6.2: The Divisions of General Practice and local Medical Deputising Service (MDSs) are to develop closer cooperation to promote coordination between general practice and MDSs with a particular emphasis on participation of MDSs in Division Aged Care GP Panels to assist in providing after-hours services to residential aged care facilities and the possible use of MDSs in providing in-hours care to these facilities.)

Answer:

One of the roles of Medicare Locals will be to ensure that communities in their region have suitable after hours services in place by building on existing arrangements and directing funding to after hours services that best meet local needs. Medicare Locals will make the best possible use of the available local health infrastructure, including existing after hours GP service providers such as Medical Deputising Services.