

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Additional Estimates 2010-11, 23 February 2011

Question: E11-182

OUTCOME 11: Mental Health

Topic: BETTER ACCESS

Written Question on Notice

Senator Fierravanti-Wells asked:

- a) How many consumers and carers were consulted as part of the evaluation of the Better Access Program.

Please also advise:

- b) How was this consultation done?  
c) How were they chosen?  
d) Which of the four components of the evaluation directly contacted consumers and carers?

Answer:

a - d)

The evaluation included a stakeholder consultation component focusing on stakeholder experiences, perceptions and opinions with regard to the effectiveness and appropriateness of the Better Access initiative (Component D). A total of 215 consumers and carers were consulted as part of this component of the evaluation.

The Department provided the consultants conducting Component D with a list of key stakeholders who were invited to provide their views with regard to the Better Access initiative. The consultants were not limited to the stakeholders included on the list. Component D used a number of methods to consult with consumers and carers including small group workshops, face-to-face interviews, teleconferences. Consumers and carers were also invited to participate in an online survey.

In addition to the consultation conducted under component D, a total of 906 consumers participated in Component A (A study of consumers and their outcomes) and 530 consumers participated in Component A.2 (A study of consumers and their outcomes focusing on the occupational therapy and social work sectors) of the Better Access evaluation.

In Component A, randomly-selected groups of Better Access providers (GPs, clinical and registered psychologists and psychiatrists) were approached to participate by the researchers undertaking the evaluation. Once they agreed to participate, providers approached consecutive new consumers (according to a specific protocol) and invited these consumers to take part in the evaluation. A total of 299 providers who participated in Component A recruited 906 consumers. Consumers were required to contribute information through outcome measures as well as interviews and surveys.

In Component A.2, the recruitment process was similar, except that all social workers and occupational therapists providing services under Better Access were invited to participate, and they were asked to approach consumers who had completed treatment to take part in the study. 191 social workers recruited 458 consumers, and 35 occupational therapists recruited 72 consumers. Consumers and providers were interviewed and surveyed about their respective experiences with receiving and delivering Better Access care.