

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Additional Estimates 2010-11, 23 February 2011

Question: E11-223

OUTCOME 4: Aged Care and Population Ageing

Topic: ONE-STOP SHOPS

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Senator Fierravanti-Wells asked:

In regards to One-Stop Shops, can I please get:

- a) An outline of what has been achieved, where we are at now and what is going to be implemented by 1 July?
- b) What does 'basic level of services' mean? I would really like to understand what it is that we are talking at, where they are going to be, what the actual service that is going to be provided is?
- c) Where it is not a physical location, what that service is actually going to be?

Answer:

- a) On 5 April 2011, at the National Home and Community Care Conference, Minister Butler announced the first step of the phased implementation of a new 'front end' for aged care.

From 1 July 2011, older Australians and their carers will find it easier to access and navigate the aged care system with the introduction of a single phone number identifying a single point of entry for people seeking information and access to aged care services. This will in time replace the range of numbers currently in operation.

The Department is also making improvements to the aged care website to ensure comprehensive and up to date information is available for people who like to find their information online.

These are the first steps of the phased implementation with further improvements to the new front end for aged care to be considered in the context of the Government's response to the Final Report of the Productivity Commission *Caring for Older Australians* Inquiry.

The system will be closely aligned with Medicare Locals and Local Hospital Networks to ensure people's health needs are detected and addressed, with services coordinated across the health and aged care systems.

- b) A basic level of service for the initial phase means improved information to new users (including building consistency) through one highly visible entry point. This addresses one of the key concerns of older people, by making it easier to access the aged care system. This will scale up to include nationally consistent intake, assessment, service linking and review over the period of implementation to 2014.
- c) Telephone assistance will be provided by skilled staff and web based information will be provided with email assistance where required. Over time, as the phased implementation progresses, local assessment and service linking teams will provide a strong community presence across Australia.