

Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee

ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES – 11 FEBRUARY 2016 ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Department of Human Services

Topic: Belmont Service Centre - closure

Question reference number: HS 126

Senator: Cameron

Type of question: Written

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 4 April 2016

Number of pages: 2

Question:

- a) How many staff will be relocated from Belmont, NSW to other centres? Did the Minister seek advice from DHS or did DHS offer advice on Belmont relocation?
- b) How many interactions, face to face and other, were handled by Belmont service centre in the past three years?
- c) What is the demographic and payment type profile of users of the Belmont centre?
- d) What consultation has been conducted with the customers at Belmont as to where they will access services if Belmont is shut down? Was any consultation work done before making the decisions to shut down Belmont?

Answer:

- a) Four staff permanently based at the Belmont Service Centre will relocate to the Charlestown Service Centre at 331 Charlestown Road, Charlestown. The department has both offered advice and been requested to provide the Minister with information, in relation to this co-location.
- b) The Belmont Service Centre provided approximately 82,500 customer interactions between January 2013 and January 2016.
- c) Information regarding the demographic profile of the Belmont area can be accessed through the following link: www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/censushome.nsf/home/quickstats.
An enquiry category profile for recipients accessing the Belmont Service Centre in October 2015 is as follows:

Enquiry Category	Belmont – October 2015
	As Percentage of Site Total Contacts
Medicare	64.9%
myGov	21.7%
Older Australians	4.3%
Job Seekers	3.4%
Families	2.7%
Carers or Person with Disability	1.8%
Students and Trainees	0.6%
Other	0.5%
Parenting Payment	0.1%

- d) There has been extensive engagement with communities across Australia on the One-stop Shop approach since 2009, including in the greater Lake Macquarie area. The department applied a comprehensive stakeholder engagement strategy to the co-location of services delivered from the Belmont Service Centre including; providing detailed communication products about the changed servicing arrangements in the Belmont Service Centre, reinforced by staff at the point of service. The department has also engaged local Medical Practitioners, Specialists, Dentists, Imaging providers, Allied Health Professionals, local Pharmacies and Local, State and Federal representatives. Advertisements were also placed in the Newcastle Herald and Newcastle Star prior and post co-location implementation.