

Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee

ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES – 2 MARCH 2017 ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Department of Human Services

Topic: Belmont (WA) Medicare Office

Question reference number: 36 (HS 40)

Senator: Watt

Type of question: Written

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 21 April 2017

Number of pages: 1

Question:

- a) What are the plans and timeframe for re-establishing a full service office at Belmont?
- b) The current contingencies in place for ensuring that staff have a safe working environment, including access to a private and secure space for staff and their belongings?
- c) What other arrangements can be made available to customers where face-to-face contact is required to access Medicare benefits?
- d) When and how the issue of access for motorised wheelchairs and mobile buggies be resolved?
- e) What contingencies will be put in place to ensure the privacy of customer information?

Answer:

- a) The Department will assess future tenancy arrangements in the Belmont Forum complex when redevelopment works at the precinct are complete.
- b) Secure key operated locks have been installed at the Belmont Pop-up unit allowing staff to access lockable storage space to store personal belongings. An alarm system has been provisioned within the Pop-up unit allowing for synchronisation to mobile duress alarms carried by staff at all times.
- c) For the limited number of services not available through digital channels and supported by staff at the Belmont Pop-up outlet, people are able to access the full range of Medicare face-to-face services at nearby sites at Cannington Service Centre or the Perth myGov shopfront.
- d) The height and width of desks within the Belmont Pop-up outlet meet Australian standards and staff are available to support people that present with a mobility impairment. The desks are reflective of the fixed height provided within the Department's Service Centres. Staff can also provide assistance in supporting people through the use of their own personal digital device including smartphones or tablets.
- e) Staff adhere to the Department's strict privacy and confidentiality guidelines at all times and deploy discretion in all interactions ensuring that personal information is only used to support and assist people in completing their business with the Department.