

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Additional Estimates 2016 - 2017, 1 March 2017

Ref No: SQ17-000069

OUTCOME: 2 - Health Access and Support Services

Topic: Cost of Pap Smears

Type of Question: Hansard Page 99, 1 March 2017

Senator: Di Natale, Richard

Question:

Senator DI NATALE: Yes, \$28. It is basically the number of women who are having a Pap smear over that six-month period at \$30 each. That is an additional cost—not to mention the fact that you are exposing women to an intervention that would not have been necessary had the deadline been met. What is the total cost of \$28 per smear for that six months?

Prof. Murphy: I think we built the additional cost in on the basis of the increase. We would have to take that on notice from the medical benefits division. All I know is that the modelling over the six months is about \$13.5 million. We would have to provide on notice what the breakdown is, but the majority of that is the liquid-based cytology.

Answer:

The Department of Health confirms that the additional cost associated with the interim arrangements for cervical screening from 1 May 2017 to 30 November 2017 on the Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) are estimated to be \$13.5 million. Final costs will need to be agreed in the Budget.

Liquid Based Cytology makes up the greater proportion of this estimated \$13.5 million because this MBS item (73069) has a higher fee. Cost estimates, based on discussions with the pathology sector, assume 50 per cent liquid-based cytology and 50 per cent Pap smears during this period.