

Senate Standing Committee on Community Affairs

BUDGET ESTIMATES - 2 JUNE 2011 ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Human Services Portfolio

Topic: Professional Services Reviews

Question reference number: HSW 7

Senator: Back

Type of question: Written

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 22 July 2011

Number of pages: 1

Question:

Is any consideration or distinction given to difference kinds of practice ie with regard to longer consultation periods with specialists or the high volume of patients seen by metro GPs or consideration of rural practice?

Answer:

Medicare Australia's peer comparison data does not provide specific information about practice location and specialty groups. Medicare Australia's initial data comparison is based on broader health professional groups (i.e. comparing general practitioners with general practitioners). It is at the stage of data analysis and interview with the health professional that Medicare Australia takes into account factors such as practice style, region and client base.

All health professionals identified for intervention are offered an interview with a medical adviser as part of the Practitioner Review Program process. The interview allows the health professional to provide details in relation to the nature of their practice, which may then be taken into account by Medicare Australia when determining the appropriate course of action.

If the health professional satisfies Medicare Australia's concerns at interview, no referral to the Professional Services Review will take place.