

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Budget Estimates 2011-2012, 30/31 May 2011

Question: E11-303

OUTCOME 12: Health Workforce Capacity

Topic: AUSTRALIAN STANDARD GEOGRAPHIC CLASSIFICATION-REMOTENESS AREA CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM (ASGC-RA)

Written Question on Notice

Senator Fierravanti-Wells asked:

What is being done to address short-comings in the roll out of the Australian Standard Geographic Classification - Remoteness Area classification system (ASGC-RA) which is used to allocate medical practitioners under the General Practice Rural Incentives Program (GPRIP)?

Answer:

In late 2010, the Department engaged the National Centre for Social Applications of Geographic Information Systems (GISCA) in the University of Adelaide, which is an expert organisation in the geographic field, to look at specific areas that were identified by some rural stakeholders.

The analysis has been completed by GISCA and its advice is currently being carefully considered.

At this stage there is no data to demonstrate that there are any negative implications around the new classification. The new system has been in operation for approximately twelve months and first year data is currently being finalised.

The Department will continue to monitor the transition to the ASGC-RA system, particularly with regard to changes to doctor numbers in rural areas by taking into account doctor numbers from the implementation of the system and monitoring potential movement of those numbers over a period of time to make an informed impact assessment.