

Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee

BUDGET ESTIMATES - 4 JUNE 2013 ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Human Services Portfolio

Topic: Australian Hearing - uptake of the Rehab Plus service

Question reference number: HS 1

Senator: Siewert

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Question:

Senator SIEWERT: Can you provide us with an update on the uptake of the Rehab Plus service?

Ms Mavrias: I do not have any exact figures at the moment. What I can say is that we have worked with the Office of Hearing Services. There was consultation in order to try to improve the uptake. There has been information sent around to a lot of the providers clarifying the criteria and reminding people about the importance of providing that service to our clients, and certainly Australian Hearing has done quite a lot of work to put a program in place to ensure that clients fitted for the first time have access to that service.

Senator SIEWERT: Are you putting any specific strategies in place to improve the uptake of it or are you relying on the office to do that?

Ms Mavrias: No, we have been putting in some strategies ourselves. In terms of making all of our clinicians aware, we have provided some additional information around the programs we can run for people that have been fitted for the first time, and we have also been using the information we have in our database to, again, make clients aware of this service. We have been much more proactive around inviting clients in to access it.

Senator SIEWERT: Has that seen the uptake of it?

Ms Mavrias: We have seen some increase, yes.

Senator SIEWERT: What percentage?

Ms Mavrias: I do not have the exact number with me.

Senator SIEWERT: Are you able to take that on notice? What has been the increase over the last number of months, over whatever the reporting period is, the uptake of it?

Ms Mavrias: Yes.

Answer:

There has been an increase in the number of Rehab Plus services provided by Australian Hearing this financial year. Between 1 July 2012 and 31 May 2013, a total of 1,322 Rehab Plus claims were made compared to 245 in the full 2011-12 financial year. This represents a 440 per cent increase year to date.