

Senate Community Affairs Committee
ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Social Services Portfolio
2014-15 Budget Estimates Hearings

Outcome Number: 1

Question No: 52

Topic: McClure Review

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Brown asked:

Recent speculation suggests that the Government is considering requiring drug testing for all welfare recipients. Can the Department explain how this might work?

- a) Is the department aware of the number of welfare recipients that have been tested, and the number that have recorded a positive test result?
- b) What is the cost associated with administering these drug tests in New Zealand?
- c) Does the Department consider that the costs associated with administering these tests is worthwhile, considering the number of people that have returned a positive result?
- d) Has any evaluation been done on the New Zealand experience? What were the stated aims of the policy in New Zealand, and have they met those aims?

Answer:

This QoN was answered in part at the hearing on 4 June 2014 – Please see Hansard pages CA66 and CA67.

The Department does not have further information on the New Zealand welfare reform measure that requires beneficiaries with work obligations to take and pass a drug test where an employer or training provider asks for a drug test as part of the application process for a suitable job.