

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

Outcome Number: 3

Question No: 473

Topic: Workforce and Quality

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Polley asked:

What strategies are in place to build the workforce and ensure adequate wages and career paths are in place to meet the unmet demand? Particularly in rural and regional areas?

Answer:

Through the Aged Care Workforce Fund, there is a range of initiatives currently being implemented to develop, attract, recruit and retain a skilled aged care workforce through the funding of training, education, financial incentives and assistance, workforce support and Indigenous-specific workforce activities. The Aged Care Workforce Fund aims to improve the quality of aged care by developing the skills of the aged care workforce through:

- Facilitating a range of training, education and supports;
- Delivering initiatives that support and facilitate collaboration between the aged care, training, education and research sectors;
- Targeted workforce training and development strategies for priority target groups, specifically Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and services in rural and remote areas; and
- Responding to emerging issues and supporting the introduction of innovative practices in aged care.

The Department has extended most initiatives under the Aged Care Workforce Fund until 30 June 2015 while work is undertaken to conduct a stocktake of Commonwealth aged care workforce initiatives funded over the last three years.

In the 2014-15 Budget, the Government increased the Viability Supplement in residential and home care by 20 per cent from 1 July 2014, targeting regional, rural and remote providers in recognition of their additional costs.