

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

**Outcome Number: 2**

**Question No: 806**

**Topic: Stronger Relationships Trial**

**Hansard Page: Written**

**Senator Brown** asked:

Are there industry guidelines as to what is a 'marriage educator'? If yes, did the Department take these guidelines into account when designing the program? How?

**Answer:**

There are no industry guidelines. Sections 2.2 of the *Stronger Relationships* trial Operational Guidelines provides a definition for education services as follows:

*A relationship education service is one where the provider identifies couple-relationship skills attainment as the principal focus of the activity. Such a service may include elements of parenting skills training, financial counselling or other family services so long as the central goal of the service is to develop skills relevant to couple-relationship formation and maintenance.*

In addition, organisations who are not currently funded to deliver Family and Relationship Services under the Family Support Program are required to demonstrate that personnel are accredited by, registered with or a member of a recognised professional association including but not limited to the:

- Australian Association of Family Therapy;
- Australian Association of Social Workers;
- Australian Counselling Association;
- Australian Psychological Society;
- Australian Register of Counsellors and Psychotherapists;
- Marriage and Relationship Educators' Association of Australia; and
- Psychotherapy and Counselling Federation of Australia.