

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Budget Estimates 2015 - 2016, 1 - 2 June 2015

Ref No: SQ15-000335

OUTCOME: 2 - Access to Pharmaceutical Services

Topic: Pharmacy Agreement

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Senator: Di Natale, Richard

Question:

The Department of Health failed to keep a record of meetings with the Pharmacy Guild during the negotiations of the Fifth Community Pharmacy Agreement (5CPA); they failed to take minutes of meetings and didn't prepare agreed notes of what had been discussed - why were no records kept on a contract worth over \$15 billion?

Answer:

The ANAO's report on the Administration of the Fifth Community Pharmacy Agreement states at paragraph 30 that the Department of Health 'did not keep a formal record of its meetings with the Pharmacy Guild during the 5CPA'. It should not be inferred that the Department is not in possession of any records in relation to these meetings. Negotiating the Fifth Community Pharmacy Agreement ('the 5CPA') was an iterative process the outcomes of which were embodied and documented in the 5CPA itself. Sufficient records were kept to ensure that the matters agreed during the negotiations were encapsulated in successive versions of the draft agreement and ultimately in the 5CPA itself.