

**Senate Community Affairs Committee**  
**ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**  
**SOCIAL SERVICES PORTFOLIO**  
**2017-18 Budget Estimates Hearings**

**Outcome Number: 1.10 Working Age Payments**

**Question No: SQ17-000495**

**Topic: Mental health, comorbidity and budget measures**

**Hansard page: Written**

**Senator Rachel Siewert** asked:

The provisions also state the recipients who engage in appropriate drug or alcohol treatment can have this contribute to meeting their mutual obligation requirements in order to continue receiving payments. What happens if the person being tested and requiring treatment is unable to access a service because they are not available in their area, or, as is often the case, there is a significant waiting time to access the service?

**Answer:**

If a job seeker tests positive more than once during the drug testing trial, they will be referred to a medical professional for examination of their circumstances and any appropriate treatment options. If referred by the medical professional, the job seekers will need to have a treatment activity in their job plan as part of their Mutual Obligation Requirements. The job seeker will have to comply with the requirements included in their job plan, including any activities to address their drug dependency.

If a recommended treatment option is not currently available, the job seeker will be required to demonstrate a commitment to pursuing the treatment when it is available (such as being on a waiting list) and undertake other appropriate activities tailored to their circumstances in the meantime.