

**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: SQ17-000504**

**Topic: Medical support and treatment options**

**Hansard page: Written**

**Senator Rachel Siewert asked:**

Given that the National Ice Taskforce Report emphasised the importance of an emphasis on drug treatment over law enforcement as a response to ice use, why will trial participants only be directed to medical support upon a second positive test?

**Answer:**

Under the proposed drug testing trial model, job seekers who test positive to their initial drug test will be subject to further testing, including within 25 working days of the first test.

This is designed to identify those who may have ongoing drug dependency issues and may benefit from pursuing treatment. Those who test positive to more than one test will be referred to a medical professional for an assessment of their circumstances and any appropriate treatment options. If treatment is recommended by the medical professional, the job seeker would be required to have a treatment activity incorporated into their Job Plan.

At any point in time outside the trial, job seekers identified as having drug dependency issues, including through self-disclosure, will be able to pursue treatment as part of their Job Plan.

From 1 January 2018, all job seekers in jobactive will be able to count drug and alcohol treatment towards their Annual Activity Requirement, regardless of whether that treatment was recommended by a medical professional, as part of the drug testing trial, or by other means. This means that job seekers will have more capacity to participate in treatment and their other requirements may be reduced. Currently these arrangements only apply to job seekers in Stream C of jobactive.