

**Senate Community Affairs Committee**

**ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO**

**Supplementary Budget Estimates 2012-2013, 17 & 19 October 2012**

**Question: E12-008**

**OUTCOME 1: Population Health**

**Topic: HEPATITIS C**

**Type of Question: Written Question on Notice**

**Number of pages: 1**

**Senator: Senator Di Natale**

**Question:**

I am particularly interested in the National Hepatitis C Strategy – in particular, the issues around increasing access to clinical care for people with chronic Hepatitis C, on page 10 of the document. It includes one specific indicator around the proportion of people with chronic Hepatitis C who are dispensed drugs for their infection through the section 100 program. Do we have numbers on how many people have been treated in the past 12 months and whether there has been an increase?

**Answer:**

Data that is collected consists of prescription numbers for Hepatitis C pharmaceuticals available under the Highly Specialised Drugs (S100) Program. Script volume is not an indication of the number of people on treatment for Hepatitis C in the past 12 months.

Please note that Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme data does not allow identification of a condition where the drug prescribed has been approved for multiple clinical conditions. Some drugs indicated for treatment of patients with Hepatitis C can also be used to treat patients with Hepatitis B and HIV.

The data for Hepatitis C pharmaceuticals dispensed in 2011 is currently not available. The most recent year for which data are available is 2010 with 3760 people estimated to have received treatment. This is based on the Kirby Institute Australian Surveillance Report 2011, from which data modelling assumes that 50 per cent of people were receiving treatment for 6 months and the remaining 50 per cent were receiving treatment for 12 months.

For further information on the National Hepatitis C Strategy, please see response provided to Question on Notice E12-194.