

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

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

Question: E12-052

OUTCOME 5: Primary Care

Topic: GP ASSIST TASMANIA AND TAS MEDICARE LOCAL

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Number of pages: 1

Senator: Senator Bushby

Question:

Is the Minister aware of the potential impact on recruiting and retaining GPs in rural and remote areas in Tasmania if the current combined model is abandoned and GPs are required to provide increased after-hours service?

Answer:

The Tasmanian Medicare Local has responsibility for developing a plan for the provision of face-to-face comprehensive after hours services from 1 July 2013. Continuity of after hours services is a priority. Implementation of new arrangements for after hours services must minimise disruption to the range of support services that Tasmanian GPs have grown to rely on and expect.

An average of 60 per cent more funding for a Medicare Local region is available for after-hours locum services than was provided under the Practice Incentive Program (After Hours Incentive) and GPAH schemes.

Also, as part of the Government's health reform measures, more doctors providing services in regional and rural areas are coming on line as a result of the significant investment in rural and remote general practice training.