

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

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

Question: E12-171

OUTCOME 12: Health Workforce Capacity

Topic: Health Workforce

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Number of pages: 1

Senator: Senator Boyce

Question:

Given the increasing shortfall of medical professions, is it a priority of the governments to ensure women medical professionals who have left the workforce for a period of time, are provided with the necessary support to assist them to re-enter the workforce as seamlessly as possible? Please outline what support is provided.

Answer:

The Australian Government is committed to ensuring there is a quality, well distributed and flexible health workforce. The establishment of Health Workforce Australia (HWA) as part of the Council of Australian Government reform in 2008, demonstrates this commitment. HWA's work program includes the first national workforce modelling which predicts likely supply and demand for doctors, nurses and midwives up to 2025. Health Ministers in collaboration with HWA have agreed to priority policies to address identified workforce issues. These priorities include the implementation of a national medical training advisory network to coordinate the medical training pipeline to ensure Australia has a future sustainable and well distributed medical workforce.

The specific requirements for re-entry to the workforce following extended absence are determined by the registration board for the relevant profession. The Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) website at www.ahpra.gov.au contains further information about registration requirements and links to the websites of the national registration boards.

The Government provides support for practitioners in a range of health professions to upskill, further their education or meet mandatory training requirements. Scholarship, locum and support schemes assist in creating and supporting a range of flexible work options.