

**Senate Community Affairs Committee**

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

**Supplementary Budget Estimates 17 & 19 October 2012**

**Question:** E12-180

**OUTCOME 2:** Access to Pharmaceutical Services

**Topic:** CHEMOTHERAPY DRUGS

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

**Number of pages:** 1

**Senator:** Senator Boyce

**Question:**

Has an analysis been undertaken of the impact on cancer patients if the level of funding to the sector reduces to a level that leaves the model unviable for suppliers of chemotherapy drugs?

What have been the findings from this analysis?

**Answer:**

The Department of Health and Ageing is not aware of, nor received any reports of closures or discontinuation of chemotherapy services as a result of price disclosure changes.

Major suppliers of chemotherapy medicines have continued supplying these medicines consistent with the current Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme arrangements.

Further the Department is in ongoing consultations with the Pharmacy Guild of Australia and the private hospital sector to gain a first-hand understanding of the costs and business models for the supply of chemotherapy medicines. A key part of this engagement is both visiting a range of hospitals across Australia and to obtain from these hospitals financial information on their chemotherapy services.

The Department is using this information together with information provided by the Guild to identify the current industry costs for the dispensing of chemotherapy medicines.