

**Senate Community Affairs Committee**

**ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO**

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

**Question:** E12-286

**OUTCOME 11:** Mental Health

**Topic:** BETTER ACCESS

**Type of Question:** Hansard Page 72, 17 October 2012

**Number of pages:** 3

**Senator:** Senator Wright

**Question:**

Do you have the figures for the total cost for this year, from 1 January to 30 September this year—the total cost, first of all, over that nine-month period, because that is the period up to 30 September since the change came in—and then the cost, particularly, for the six additional treatment sessions in exceptional circumstances for that period of time; do you have that available?

**Answer:**

Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) data on the total benefits paid for Better Access allied mental health services provided under 'exceptional circumstances' for this calendar year (January to September 2012) is presented in Question on Notice E12-282. See columns E and F of Table 1 attached.

MBS data shows that from 1 January to 30 September 2012, total benefits paid for individual Better Access allied mental health services was over \$269.4 million. Benefits paid for services provided under 'exceptional circumstances' was \$11.3 million.

**List of Questions on Notice on Better Access MBS data**

Question on Notice	Question	Table 1 Reference
E12-282	In relation to Better Access – am interested in having details about the total annual cost over the past five years of the additional six sessions accessed by clients in exceptional circumstances under the Better Access program-it is the cost of any additional in that last amount of six sessions that are available under the program.	Column E
E12-283	For the past five years, what percentage of the overall Better Access funding has actually gone towards paying for the additional six treatment sessions that could be accessed under exceptional circumstances? So, for each of those years, the percentage of the total that was actually paying for the sessions in the last six that were available under exceptional circumstances.	Column G
E12-284	Do you have them [percentages] for the last year? Have they been ascertained at all? [The data normally gives the total sessional data per item, so we would have to specifically look at whether we could pull that out of the data, and that would take a while.]	Column G
E12-285	It would be useful if we could have that so we could interrogate it-the data on percentages for the last year.	Column G
E12-286	Do you have the figures for the total cost for this year, from 1 January to 30 September this year—the total cost, first of all, over that nine-month period, because that is the period up to 30 September since the change came in—and then the cost, particularly, for the six additional treatment sessions in exceptional circumstances for that period of time; do you have that available?	Columns E and F
E12-288	I am interested in knowing how many clients or individuals have access to the six exceptional circumstances treatment sessions that are available, over the past five years. So, in total, the number of people who have accessed those—have used those last six sessions that were available, either in part or in full.	Column A
E12-383	Considering the whole program, essentially, what percentage of treatment sessions are those that were accessed in the exceptional circumstances aspect of the program. So, as to those last six sessions, the percentage overall for the past five years.	Column D

**Table 1: MBS data on Better Access allied mental health services provided under 'exceptional circumstances' (1)**

Year of service (2)	A No. of persons receiving more than 10 individual allied mental health services (or more than 12 for 2007-2011)	B Percentage of TOTAL persons receiving more than 10 allied mental health services (or 12 for 2007-2011)	C No. of individual allied mental health services received, beyond the 10 (or 12 for 2007-2011) calendar year limit	D Percentage of TOTAL allied mental health services received, beyond the 10 (or 12 for 2007-2011) calendar year limit	E MBS benefits paid for individual allied mental health services, beyond the 10 (or 12 for 2007-2011) calendar year limit	F TOTAL MBS benefits paid for individual allied mental health services	G MBS benefits paid for individual allied mental health services received beyond the calendar year limit as a percentage of TOTAL benefits paid
2007	15,578	4.80%	55,585	3.40%	\$5,754,361.00	\$145,057,814.00	4.00%
2008	29,691	6.40%	112,114	4.70%	\$11,850,486.00	\$218,567,445.00	5.40%
2009	40,050	7.10%	152,130	5.10%	\$16,403,204.00	\$279,631,884.00	5.90%
2010	47,117	7.30%	177,693	5.20%	\$19,606,431.00	\$331,019,797.00	5.90%
2011	34,408	4.80%	120,284	3.30%	\$13,586,500.00	\$365,144,408.00	3.70%
2012 (Jan-Sept 2012)	31,892	5.30%	99,403	3.70%	\$11,328,104.00	\$269,427,546.00	4.20%

Note: (1) Figures are for individual Better Access allied mental health services. Group allied mental health services are excluded from the above MBS data.

(2) Periods shown are for calendar year of service, for claims processed between 1 January 2007 and 30 September 2012.