

Senate Community Affairs Committee

**ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO**

Supplementary Budget Estimates 2012-2013, 17 October 2012

Question: E12-364

OUTCOME 0: Whole of portfolio

Topic: CHILD PROTECTION AND EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES DATA
COLLECTION

Type of Question: Hansard Pages 16–17, 17 October 2012

Number of pages: 2

Senator: Senator Siewert

Question:

When was the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) commissioned to undertake developmental work on an ongoing educational outcomes national data collection, that looks at ways in which children in the child protection system progress through education?

Answer:

National data on the educational outcomes of children in child protection services have been developed in three stages, with work being commissioned originally in 2003–04, and carried out between 2003–2012. The three stages of work were funded by the former Community and Disability Services Ministers Advisory Council—now the Standing Council on Community and Disability Services Advisory Council (SCCDSAC)—and were undertaken by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) in collaboration with state and territory governments.

- Stage 1 of the pilot data collection (commissioned in 2003–04) provided a cross-sectional snapshot of the academic performance of children on guardianship/custody orders in 2003. The AIHW released a report outlining these findings in June 2007.
- Stage 2 of the pilot data collection (commissioned in 2007–08) followed up these children over the next three years (2004 to 2006), with the aim of identifying any change in their academic performance over time. AIHW released a report on stage 2 in January 2011. Both stages of the pilot data collection were very time-intensive for participating jurisdictions, resulting in considerable delays in data provision. It was agreed that a simpler methodology was required to enable ongoing national collection of these data.
- Stage 3 (commissioned in 2011–12) built on stages 1 and 2 to develop a more streamlined data collection and linkage methodology, and create a national Education Module to link to the Child Protection National Minimum Data Set. This involved in-depth consultation and scoping work, taking into account the need to develop a robust and regularly reportable indicator of educational outcomes. The most recent scoping work has now been completed and a final report will be presented to the SCCDSAC by the end of 2012.

The report recommends a process for a phased implementation of a new Education Module in order to provide an ongoing data source for regular reporting of educational outcomes for children in the child protection system. The next proposed phase will be to develop a linked data set focusing on the achievements of children in the child protection system against national minimum standards for literacy and numeracy. This will use NAPLAN—National Assessment Program - Literacy and Numeracy—data, in order to compare results to the results of these children's peers.