

**Senate Community Affairs Committee**

**ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**HEALTH PORTFOLIO**

**Supplementary Budget Estimates 2014 - 2015, 22 October 2014**

**Ref No:** SQ14-001182

**OUTCOME:** 2 - Access to Pharmaceutical Services

**Topic:** Costs of Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme Medicines

**Type of Question:** Hansard Page 87, 22 October 2014

**Senator:** Reynolds, Linda

**Question:**

Do you have exact numbers for that (cost of some individual medications)?

**Answer:**

Analysis of Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) listings from August 1991 to June 2014 shows that the number of PBS listings has increased over time, and that the price of these listings is increasing.

In 1991, 848 items cost \$20 or less each time they were dispensed, and the most expensive item was \$843.43 (in 1991 dollars). In 2014, while there are a similar number of item listings that cost \$20 or less (835 items), the number of higher cost listings has grown significantly, including almost 600 items that cost more than \$1,000 each time they are dispensed. Since August 1991 the number of item listings:

- Priced between \$21 and \$50 has increased by 296 per cent;
- Priced between \$51 and \$100 has increased by 506 per cent;
- Priced between \$101 and \$500 has increased by 535 per cent;
- Priced between \$501 and \$1,000 has increased by 2,310 per cent;
- Priced between \$1,001 and \$5,000 has increased from 0 to 536 items; and
- Priced over \$5,000 has increased from 0 to 61 items.