

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Supplementary Budget Estimates 2014 - 2015, 22 October 2014

Ref No: SQ14-001227

OUTCOME: 4 - Acute Care

Topic: Maternity

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Senator: Reynolds, Linda

Question:

Has there been a proportionate shift of maternity cases from the private to the public sector in recent years, and what impact has this had on government health spending?

Answer:

Equivalent data comparing public and private sector utilisation levels for non-admitted patient maternity services is not available.

During the period 2009-10 to 2011-12 the Commonwealth funded maternity services through four main channels; the Medicare Benefits Schedule; the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme; the Private Health Insurance rebate subsidy; and the National Healthcare Agreement. However, due to the nature of these programs it is not possible to identify total government health spending on maternity services under all of them, and hence a total is not available.