

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Supplementary Budget Estimates 2014 - 2015, 22 October 2014

Ref No: SQ14-001359

OUTCOME: 2 – Access to Pharmaceutical Services

Topic: Subsidising Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme Medical Co-payments

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Senator: McLucas, Jan

Question:

- a. What are the uptake figures and participation levels in this area?
- b. How many prescriptions have been dispensed under this program?
- c. Can you give a figure of numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders who have accessed prescriptions under this program this year?
- d. What percentage of prescriptions dispensed specifically relate to the management and reduction of chronic diseases?

Answer:

The Department of Health assumes the question is about the Closing the Gap (CTG) Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) Co-payment Measure and has framed its answers accordingly.

- a) Between 1 July 2010 and 30 September 2014, a total of 296,887 eligible Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients have participated in the programme. The number of patients obtaining CTG scripts equates to 44.31 per cent of the total Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population as per the Australian Bureau of Statistics 2011 Census data (ABS 2075.0).
- b) Between 1 July 2010 and 30 September 2014, 9,820,821 prescriptions have been dispensed.
- c) In 2013-14, 208,539 patients received subsidised prescriptions under this programme.
- d) The top ten drugs (by volume) prescribed under this programme are used to manage the following conditions: cholesterol, stroke prevention; diabetes; asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease; pain management; and bacterial infections.