

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Supplementary Budget Estimates 2014 - 2015, 22 October 2014

Ref No: SQ14-001360

OUTCOME: 5 - Primary Health Care

Topic: Higher Utilisation Costs for Medicare Benefits Schedule and Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Senator: McLucas, Jan

Question:

- a. How many health assessments have been carried out for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders this year to date?
- b. Is this number continuing to increase?
- c. What programs are available for follow up services?
- d. What are the MBS follow up items currently available?

Answer:

- a) There have been 124,365 health assessments carried out for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the period January 2014 to September 2014.
- b) The Health Assessment for people of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent has experienced a steady increase in uptake over the last five years.
- c) Patients are able to be referred by their GP for up to five Medicare rebateable allied health services each calendar year. Eligible allied health services are: podiatry; Aboriginal Health Work; audiology; diabetes education; chiropractic; dietetics; exercise physiology; mental health work (including mental health nurses and some social workers); occupational therapy; osteopathy; physiotherapy; psychology; and speech pathology.
- d) The eligible allied health Medicare Benefits Schedule follow up items are 81300 – 81360.