

Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee

SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES – 22 OCTOBER 2015 ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Department of Human Services

Topic: Alleged Medicare Fraud – Staff Training

Question reference number: HS 26

Senator: Cameron

Type of question: Hansard page 128

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 11 December 2015

Number of pages: 1

Question:

Senator CAMERON: Can you then provide me details of all specific training that was given to operators, as the Minister called them, to help people reclaim their identity? I wonder what specific training was given. I want details of all internal memorandums that went on this issue, details of the training, times when it was done, how many people had been trained and where they were based to deal with this. I now want to move to the issue of Centrepay.

Answer:

The Department of Human Services' service officers receive comprehensive training upon engagement as well as regular refresher training. For officers involved in helping people with identity related issues, training includes confirming proof of identity of the customer, managing privacy and confidentiality, correcting records and issuing new Medicare cards.

As at 6 November, there were approximately 150 trained staff currently supporting the Medicare public telephony lines. These staff are primarily located in centres in Adelaide, Brisbane, Perth, Melbourne and Sydney.

Customer circumstances vary and if an individual has particularly complex issues to address, the service response is escalated to a smaller, specialist technical support team with higher level skills and experience. This team comprises approximately 20 staff and is primarily located in the above mentioned sites.

If a customer advises that they have had identity related issues beyond the Department of Human Services, we have arrangements in place to refer them to IDCare who provide a specialist case management service to support people who are concerned about their personal information.