

Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment - Education

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Budget Estimates 2014-2015**

Outcome 1 - Early Childhood Education and Care

Department of Education Question No. ED0100_15

Senator Hanson-Young provided in writing.

New expense measures include an extra \$12 million for occasional care.

Question

1. How will this funding be provided to occasional care services?
2. Will these occasional care services be expected to meet basic quality standards expected of all other early childhood education and care services under the National Quality Framework?
3. Has the Government consulted with the states on implementing a new occasional care funding model?
4. Will the Government be asking the states to contribute funding for occasional care, similar to the old Neighbourhood Model Occasional Care model?

Answer

1. Funding will be provided through agreements with state and territory governments consistent with the Inter-Governmental Agreement on Federal Financial Relations. Participating states and territories will administer the programme, including the allocation of funds to eligible organisations providing the care.
2. The NOC programme is not linked to the National Quality Framework provisions, minimum requirements or structured programmes. Each jurisdiction has the responsibility for enforcing standards of health, safety, welfare and developmental needs of children in formal care and education services.
3. The Assistant Minister for Education, the Hon Sussan Ley MP, has consulted with her state and territory colleagues regarding the programme.
4. Yes, the NOC programme will operate through joint funding from both the Australian Government and states and territories. Each participating state or territory is expected to contribute 45 per cent of the total cost of the programme, as per arrangements under the previous programme.