

Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment - Education

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

Outcome 1 - Early Childhood Education and Care

Department of Education Question No. ED0428_15

Senator Lines provided in writing.

Question

On 25 September 2014, the Government announced that a funding offer would be made to the governments of Queensland, Tasmania, South Australia, Victoria and Western Australia, as part of the \$12.6 million National Occasional Care Program Agreement (NOC).

- (a) Have all of these governments agreed to fund 45 per cent of the program?
- (b) Why did the Northern Territory, New South Wales and the ACT not accept the offer of funding?
- (c) What are the conditions attached to the funding, other than needing to match it with 45 per cent of funds?
- (d) Were family day care services considered to provide the occasional care, rather than proceeding with changes to the Community Support Program that will result in around 80 per cent of family day care services losing their funding?

Answer

- (a) It is a condition of funding that all states participating in the National Occasional Care Programme (NOC) agree to contribute 45 per cent of the total cost of the programme.
- (b) The NSW Government advised that it would not participate in NOC due to the potential impact the programme may have on occasional care services already supported by the state government. The ACT and the NT do not deliver non-Child Care Benefit approved occasional care services.
- (c) Other than the requirement to contribute 45 per cent to the cost of the programme, the conditions attached to the funding under the NOC National Partnership Project Agreement are:
 - that each funded service must not be a Child Care Benefit (CCB) approved service
 - service providers meet all applicable state/territory child care regulations
 - preference be given to funding regional and remote areas, which do not currently have occasional care services
 - provide an annual report to the Australian Government.

- (d) Funded services under NOC must not be CCB-approved services. As such, any CCB-approved Family Day Care service would not be able to deliver occasional care places under NOC. There is no relationship between NOC and changes to the Community Support Programme.