

Senate Finance and Public Administration Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Supplementary Budget Estimates 2016 - 2017, 21 October 2016

Ref No: SQ16-000607

OUTCOME: 2 - Health Access and Support Services

Topic: Funding for Aboriginal Health Services

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Senator: Dodson, Patrick

Question:

There has been a lot of commentary recently about people avoiding general practice care because of increasing costs. Are you aware of how this applies to Indigenous people who already have poorer access to health care?

Answer:

The vast majority of primary health care services to Indigenous Australians are provided without requiring a co-payment. In 2015-16, between 95% (in major cities) and 99% (in very remote locations) of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' GP attendances were bulk-billed.

The Government funds Aboriginal Medical Services to provide Indigenous specific primary health care services across the country. Most of these organisations provide bulk billing services under Medicare.

A GP administered Health Assessment service is also available on the MBS for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The inclusion of this service supports the early identification and management of health issues for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.