

**Senate Community Affairs Committee**  
**ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**  
**FAMILIES, HOUSING, COMMUNITY SERVICES AND**  
**INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS PORTFOLIO**  
**2011-12 Budget Estimates Hearings**

**Outcome Number:** 5

**Question No:** 416

**Topic:** A Better Start for Children with Disability

**Hansard Page:** Written

**Senator Boyce** asked:

What is the department doing to ensure that this practice does not continue? Has the department estimated of cost of this overcharging of fees on the autism program?

**Answer:**

As FaHCSIA receives complaints about fee increases by service providers they are investigated by Departmental Officers on a case by case basis. Service providers set their own fees for services.

A departmental review of fees undertaken in late 2010 found there was no significant increase in fees charged by service providers over the life of the HCWA Package.

To ensure transparency, service providers fee schedules are published on the FaHCSIA website providing information on the cost and type of early intervention therapy provided by that organisation. The fee schedules are provided to assist families to make choices about the services they access and how much they can expect to pay.

An annual review is conducted to continue to monitor fees charged for HCWA interventions and ensure future fee increases are not excessive.

Any claims that are received are investigated thoroughly and dealt with accordingly.