

**Senate Standing Committee on Education Employment and Workplace
Relations**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Additional Estimates 2011-2012**

Outcome 1 - Early Childhood Education and Child Care

DEEWR Question No. EW1004_12

Senator Nash provided in writing.

Question

the In Home Care (IHC)

"Refer to ICPA letter to Minister for Childcare Kate Ellis dated 28/10/11 (copied to Senator Nash) regarding the need for greater access to the In Home Care (IHC) scheme for families in rural and remote areas. This scheme is of great importance to these families who live too far from a town to access childcare or learning and educational assistance. It helps fund a live-in carer for children aged 0-16 years. The ICPA explains initially service providers are supplied with a quota of Equivalent Full Time places (1 EFT is equivalent to 35.7 hours). The DEEWR website states IHC is a capped program and there are a limited number of places available for allocation to services.

- The ICPA states some IHC service providers have closed down and their quotas are unable to be reallocated. Is the dept aware of this and if it is accurate. If so, can it explain why quotas cannot be reallocated.
- There are also cases, according to the ICPA, where some service providers are unable to fill the places while others have a waiting list of up to 12 months. Is the dept aware of this and is anything being done to reallocate places from providers unable to fill them to those who have waiting lists."

Answer

The Department is aware of the letter and a response was provided to the Isolated Children's Parents' Association on 14 December 2011.

In Home Care is a capped program and the allocation and reallocation of places is subject to the *Child Care Benefit (Allocation of Child Care Places) Determination 2000* (the Allocation Determination).

In Home Care places returned to the Department can be reallocated to other services. In addition, the Allocation Determination allows the Department to recall places that have been allocated to a service but have remained unused for a period of six months or more. These recalled places will be available for reallocation.

On 28 January 2012, the Department publicly called for applications from prospective and existing child care providers for an allocation or additional allocation of in home care places. The closing date for applications is 30 March 2012.