

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

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Budget Estimates 2010-2011**

Outcome 1 - Early Childhood

DEEWR Question No.EW0135_11

Senator Payne provided in writing.

Question

IN HOME CARE PROGRAM

How many places are currently funded under the In Home Care program? How many places are currently filled? Is there a waiting list? What is the average time that care is given? How much funding is committed to the program and for how long? What happens to places when providers cease to exist? Has there been or is there a review proposed for the In Home care program?

Answer

Services delivering In Home Care places are funded on the basis of full-time utilisation. In 2009–10, In Home Care services reported 3263 equivalent full-time utilised places.

There is no centralised waiting list for In Home Care places, however some In Home Care services maintain their own waiting lists. These waiting lists are not provided to the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations.

Data on the average time that care is given is not collected from In Home Care services. The *Interim Standards for In Home Care* stipulate that In Home Care services must reassess the eligibility of families for In Home Care every six months.

Funding for In Home Care services is allocated under the Child Care Services Support Program, which is an annual appropriation. Expenditure on In Home Care places amounted to approximately \$5.2 million in 2009-10. Eligible In Home Care Services are also approved to administer Child Care Benefit on behalf of families. Separate figures on government funding through Child Care Benefit for families using In Home Care is not available.

When an In Home Care service closes, its allocation of Child Care Benefit approved places is returned to a national pool of approved places.

The Department is currently undertaking an analysis of the demand and availability of approved In Home Care places. This analysis will assist the Australian Government in determining how best to re-allocate In Home Care places as they become available.