

Senate Finance and Public Administration Standing Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES – 21 OCTOBER 2008

Human Services Portfolio



Department/Agency: Medicare Australia
Outcome/Output Group: Outcome 1/Output Group 1
Topic: Medicare Item Number 16525

Senator: Barnett

Question reference number: HS15 and HS16

Type of question: Hansard F&PA 139

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 5 December 2008

HS15: Senator BARNETT—I have a question for Medicare and, Ms Mellor, you probably know what I am about to ask because I indicated the question earlier to the Department of Human Services. Firstly, (a) in terms of Medicare payments for second trimester and late term abortions and specifically Medicare item number 16525—part 3 of schedule 1 of the Health Insurance (General Medical Services) Table Regulations 2007, which I am sure you are fully aware of—can you provide the statistics on the total amount that has been paid since 1994? Secondly, (b) can that be broken down on a state and territory basis? Do you have those figures with you?

Ms Mellor—I do not have them with me now. I heard the question put during earlier discussion by the committee. The question I heard is: what evidence is required to make a payment?

Senator BARNETT—I am about to ask that question.

Ms Mellor—I do not have those detailed statistics with me, but I am happy to take that on notice.

HS16: Senator BARNETT—It may do. If you could (a) assist us in answering that and track it back to when it first commenced? If you could also (b) do a breakdown for the first trimester—I do not have the item number with me.

Ms Mellor—There are two different item numbers for management of labour in trimesters.

Senator BARNETT—Yes. If you could do it for that item number as well, that would be appreciated.

Answer:

HS15:

(a)&(b) Refer to Attachment A.

HS16:

(a) Item 16525 was introduced onto the Medicare Benefits Schedule as item 275 on 1 February 1984. It was renumbered to item 16546 on 1 December 1991 and to item 16525 on 1 November 1995. Item 35643 was introduced onto the Medicare Benefits Schedule as item 6469 on 1 February 1984. It was renumbered to item 35643 on 1 December 1991.

(b) Refer to Attachment A.

Number of pages: 3



ATTACHMENT A

Medicare statistics for MBS items 16525 and 35643 – Processed January 1994 to August 2008

Benefits paid item 16525:

Time Period	State								Total
	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA	TAS	ACT	NT	
1994	38,258	43,973	25,195	9,060	23,756	2,211	1,743	1,591	145,786
1995	40,032	45,397	33,202	9,603	32,530	2,273	3,207	2,005	168,248
1996	37,109	32,416	19,832	7,817	11,494	2,606	845	1,651	113,768
1997	35,715	27,435	19,160	8,832	9,638	2,120	1,002	1,466	105,366
1998	34,564	22,133	19,748	8,288	9,770	3,482	1,513	853	100,349
1999	30,409	29,493	20,018	9,588	8,897	2,188	1,009	841	102,443
2000	35,537	37,710	17,833	8,901	7,188	2,502	1,024	1,024	111,719
2001	38,832	41,616	20,069	11,124	7,368	2,075	1,211	691	122,986
2002	40,479	29,477	19,808	10,537	5,464	882	1,386	1,401	109,435
2003	37,656	29,494	29,530	10,085	5,589	2,527	1,259	1,803	117,942
2004	39,770	43,627	22,529	8,672	6,095	2,032	2,404	1,290	126,418
2005	47,711	53,775	23,225	10,760	6,037	4,340	1,502	941	148,291
2006	40,584	53,840	23,101	12,673	11,153	5,187	2,872	1,173	150,583
2007	47,332	56,556	22,337	10,825	10,774	4,320	2,748	2,360	157,250
2008 (to August)	36,102	40,421	14,628	8,784	7,388	3,205	1,802	800	113,132
Total	580,090	587,363	330,215	145,549	163,141	41,950	25,527	19,890	1,893,716

No. of services item 16525:

Time Period	State								Total
	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA	TAS	ACT	NT	
1994	245	280	165	57	154	14	11	10	936
1995	248	282	197	60	186	14	20	12	1,019
1996	228	199	121	48	70	16	5	10	697
1997	219	169	118	54	59	13	6	9	647
1998	208	134	119	50	59	21	9	5	605
1999	181	175	119	57	53	13	6	5	609
2000	208	222	104	52	42	15	6	6	655
2001	225	242	116	65	43	12	7	4	714
2002	231	168	113	60	31	5	8	8	624
2003	210	164	164	56	31	14	7	10	656
2004	214	236	122	47	33	11	13	7	683
2005	241	284	120	57	32	23	8	5	770
2006	209	280	116	66	58	27	15	6	777
2007	233	285	114	55	55	22	14	12	790
2008 (to August)	155	202	73	44	37	16	9	4	540
Total	3,255	3,322	1,881	828	943	236	144	113	10,722

There are a number of qualifications that need to be made on the comprehensiveness of Medicare data on terminations:

- As Medicare item 16525 can be used for intrauterine foetal death, gross foetal abnormality or life threatening maternal disease, it is not possible to provide a breakdown on the clinical reasons for use of the item numbers.
- There is no standardised reporting or national consistency in collecting the data.
- Medicare Australia statistics do not include activity that is not claimed through Medicare. This includes public patients in public hospitals.



Benefits paid item 36543:

Time Period	State					Total
	NSW/ACT	VIC/TAS	QLD	SA/NT	WA	
	Benefit (\$)					
1994	3,969,309	2,667,039	1,744,296	185,886	1,088,921	9,655,451
1995	4,143,750	2,663,269	1,785,247	167,535	1,130,062	9,889,863
1996	4,225,524	2,728,469	1,826,297	139,606	1,127,337	10,047,233
1997	4,158,705	2,618,860	1,825,422	125,881	1,129,522	9,858,391
1998	4,264,149	2,672,133	1,852,630	114,317	1,091,141	9,994,370
1999	4,307,989	2,524,233	1,930,549	116,546	1,004,224	9,883,541
2000	4,502,931	2,524,015	2,023,489	114,070	1,035,624	10,200,128
2001	4,649,589	2,510,740	2,109,489	128,699	1,104,768	10,503,285
2002	4,737,975	2,450,848	2,032,594	131,797	1,102,963	10,456,178
2003	4,599,268	2,495,705	2,039,418	126,703	1,100,361	10,361,456
2004	4,666,897	2,542,317	2,029,610	139,495	1,152,450	10,530,770
2005	4,433,436	2,505,272	2,052,199	128,251	1,142,508	10,261,665
2006	4,631,821	2,633,951	2,071,034	150,372	1,229,902	10,717,079
2007	4,678,375	2,703,176	2,177,074	133,300	1,248,053	10,939,978
2008 (to August)	3,179,935	1,823,914	1,479,434	94,056	796,152	7,373,491
Total	65,149,653	38,063,941	28,978,782	1,996,514	16,483,988	150,672,879

No. of Services item 36543:

Time Period	State					Total
	NSW/ACT	VIC/TAS	QLD	SA/NT	WA	
1994	32,001	21,131	13,595	1,599	8,365	76,691
1995	32,815	20,834	13,608	1,411	8,550	77,218
1996	32,960	21,101	13,738	1,168	8,408	77,375
1997	32,290	20,126	13,702	1,043	8,408	75,569
1998	32,396	20,216	13,669	928	7,974	75,183
1999	32,119	19,087	14,010	934	7,242	73,392
2000	32,993	19,191	14,434	910	7,360	74,888
2001	33,624	19,031	14,861	1,015	7,801	76,332
2002	33,607	18,711	14,273	1,026	7,665	75,282
2003	31,791	18,605	14,185	960	7,426	72,967
2004	31,349	18,373	13,862	1,034	7,596	72,214
2005	29,164	17,692	14,113	924	7,490	69,383
2006	29,998	18,232	14,386	1,071	8,086	71,773
2007	29,683	18,246	14,935	921	8,063	71,848
2008 (to August)	19,826	12,115	9,961	634	5,102	47,638
Total	466,616	282,691	207,332	15,578	115,536	1,087,753

There are a number of qualifications that need to be made on the comprehensiveness of Medicare data on terminations:

- As Medicare item 35643 can be used for a variety of reasons, it is not possible to provide a breakdown on the clinical reasons for use of the item numbers.
- There is no standardised reporting or national consistency in collecting the data.
- Medicare Australia statistics do not include activity that is not claimed through Medicare. This includes public patients in public hospitals.