

Senate Finance and Public Administration Standing Committee

SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES – 20 October 2009 ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Human Services Portfolio

Topic: Carers Program

Question reference number: HS58

Senator: Siewert

Type of question: *Written*

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Number of pages: 2

Question:

- a) Is it normal practice for a GP rather than a psychologist to be required to fill out a medical form for someone with Aspergers Syndrome for a Carer Allowance application?
- b) Is it Centrelink's normal practice to send correspondence to both the carer and the person they are caring for if the person being cared for cannot read or write?
- c) Is a family who is in receipt of Carer Allowance required to report their salary to Centrelink only when it changes, or on a fortnightly basis?
- d) Is it true that Centrelink only notes changes with respect to family allowances itself and not Carer Payment?
- e) If yes to (d), then why?

Answer:

- a) Various treating health professionals are able to complete a Carer Allowance Medical Report. The following treating health professionals can complete an adult medical form:
 - medical practitioners;
 - registered nurses;
 - occupational therapists;
 - physiotherapists;
 - a member of an Aged Care Assessment Team; and
 - an Aboriginal health worker in a geographically remote area.A Carer Allowance Medical Report for a child under 16 can be completed by all of the above, as well as a psychologist.
- b) Centrelink sends letters to recipients of payments such as to the recipient of Carer Allowance but not the person who is receiving the care. Centrelink will only send correspondence to a second person if that person is recorded as a nominee for a customer.

- c) Carer Allowance is not income or assets tested so a family is not required to report earnings for Carer Allowance purposes.
- d) No. Depending on the individual customer's circumstances, Centrelink will be required to note changes for all payments.
- e) Not applicable.