

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES HEARING: 13 FEBRUARY 2012

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(AE12/0458) Program 5.1: Settlement Services for Migrants and Refugees

Senator Michaelia Cash asked:

HSS: What data is kept on clients that have accessed specialised mental health services?

Answer:

Under the standard contract between the department and Humanitarian Settlement Services (HSS) providers, which commenced in April 2011, mental health services do not form part of the HSS program.

Nevertheless, under the contract, providers have certain obligations in relation to the mental health of clients, including:

- ensuring that their case managers are familiar with and attentive to any mental health risk factors as they present; and
- where a client presents with mental health issues, the case manager is required to refer the client (subject to the client's consent) to an appropriate mental health service. Such services may include specialised psychiatric services, child and adolescent programs and torture and trauma counselling.

Also, the case manager must ensure that any referral action or assistance provided to the client is documented in the client's Case Management Plan.

Responsibility for the delivery of specialised mental health services, in the form of torture and trauma counseling for humanitarian clients, were transferred to the Department of Health and Ageing (DoHA). A request for torture and trauma data would need to be referred to DoHA.