

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARINGS: 23-24 MAY 2011

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(BE11/0688) Program 4.3: Offshore Asylum Seeker Management

Senator Cash asked:

In relation to people in community detention, what entitlements are they receiving? Welfare payments? Medicare? Other health and transport benefits? Cash payments? Clothing allowance? Work rights?

Answer:

Clients in community detention remain in immigration detention and do not have the rights of visa holders in the community. This means they are not eligible for Centrelink and Medicare and do not have work rights.

Clients in community detention are supported by the Department by a financial allowance which is set at 89 per cent of the Centrelink income support payment (excluding rent assistance and family benefits payment). Clients are expected to cover their food, other groceries, public transport and other costs such as clothing from this allowance. Educational expenses and travel to and from school for minors in community detention are covered by the Department.

Clients in community detention are able to access health services provided by International Health and Medical Services providers in the community, including GPs, mental health counsellors and specialist providers.

In addition unaccompanied minors are able to access a \$200 seasonal clothing allowance in the first year. The cost of organised activities for unaccompanied minors of up to \$2000 per year is also covered by the Department, for example to cover the cost of a soccer club membership, art or music classes, or excursions during school holidays.