

## **QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE**

### **BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 21-22 MAY 2012**

#### **IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO**

#### **(BE12/0223) Program 1.1: Visa and Migration**

Senator Boyce asked:

What is your understanding of the following statement of the Minister and in particular the section underlined contained in a Media Release on 9 May and I quote; “However, the change does not alter policies relating to health conditions that are a public health risk, or would require health care or community services that would prejudice the access of Australian residents.” Is this a new obstacle to the entry of migrants with a disability given that health and community facilities for disability are seriously underfunded, in short supply and there is, already, a clear unmet need in the Australian community?

*Answer:*

Humanitarian visa applicants applying for a visa outside of Australia will not meet the health requirement if they have a health condition that is considered to be a public health threat or are likely to require health care or community care services in short supply that would prejudice the access of Australian residents. This is not a new requirement.

The Department of Health and Ageing (DoHA) advises the Department what health conditions are considered to be public health threats. Similarly DoHA provides the list of services that, if required by a visa holder, would prejudice the access of Australian residents. DoHA has advised that disability health and community care services are not considered to be services in sufficiently short supply. The Department will continue to apply the health requirement on the basis of criteria that are legitimate, objective and reasonable.