

## QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

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

#### IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

#### **(BE12/0229) Program 1.1: Visa and Migration**

Senator Boyce asked:

As a result of a Freedom of Information application abridged copies of discussions between DOHA and the Department of Immigration and Citizenship have just been released. The following is stated; "Additional information will also be sort shortly in relation to the practice of charging for TB treatment, given concerns that no national approach is in place in terms of TB treatment." Document reference) 'DIAC indicated that there had also been some concerns raised internally about the comprehensiveness of the advice provided by DoHA - with DIAC seeking additional information where required so that it is able to ensure transparency and develop "evidence-based policy". For example, DIAC's Chief Medical Officer has sought additional information in the context of advice about prejudice of access issues (to be discussed at the next FAS level meeting). Additional information will also be sought shortly in relation to the practice of charging for TB treatment, given concerns that no national approach is in place in terms of TB treatment.' This may come as surprising news to some especially given the forced repatriation of TB patients from the Torres Strait to New Guinea. So is it true we don't have a national approach when it comes to the treatment of an infectious disease like TB?

*Answer:*

States and territories are responsible for the detection and management of TB. The guiding principles underpinning Australia's response to TB are outlined in *National Strategic Plan for TB control in Australia*, a document developed by representatives of each jurisdictional TB program. The strategy recommends that there continues to be no financial barrier to achieving diagnosis, management and treatment of TB. States and territories put into operation the strategy's recommendations according to their local policies.