

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Notice given 10 May 2005

899 **Senator Allison:** To ask the Minister representing the Minister for Health and Ageing—In relation to access to free breast screening for all Australian women:

- (1) How many Australian women living in the Indian Ocean Territories are eligible for free screening mammograms through the BreastScreen Australia program.
- (2) (a) Can figures be provided on the proportion of eligible women in the Indian Ocean Territories who have used the BreastScreen Australia program in each of the past 5 years; and (b) how does this compare to the proportion of eligible women in mainland Australia who have accessed the BreastScreen Australia program.
- (3) What arrangements does the Government have in place to provide local access to the necessary equipment and staff so that women living in the Indian Ocean Territories have the same access to screening mammograms as women living in mainland Australia.
- (4) What plans does the Government have to ensure that women living in the Indian Ocean Territories are able to access the BreastScreen Australia program.

908 **Senator Allison:** To ask the Minister representing the Minister for Health and Ageing—With reference to in vitro fertilisation (IVF) services and proposals to restrict access:

- (1) Has the Government undertaken any investigation of the factors that have contributed to the increase in government rebates for IVF services over the past 10 years; if so, can a copy be provided of any information or report resulting from investigations.
- (2) What groups, if any, were consulted prior to May 2005 regarding possible restrictions on access to Medicare rebates for IVF procedures.
- (3) What data does the Government have on: (a) the proportion of Australian women accessing IVF services; (b) changes in the proportion over the past 10 years; and (c) the range and average number of IVF cycles undertaken by an infertile woman.
- (4) Can information be provided on the average out-of-pocket costs experienced by women for a single cycle of IVF for the past 10 years.

Notice given 30 March 2005

485 **Senator Allison:** To ask the Minister representing the Minister for Health and Ageing—With reference to the approval by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) of **mifepristone** (RU486) for use in Australia and the amendment of the Therapeutic Goods Act in 1996 to prevent its importation:

- (1) Has **mifepristone** been manufactured in Australia since 1996.
- (2) Has there been any application to the TGA for a licence to manufacture **mifepristone** and if so, what was the result.
- (3) If not, will the Government consider relaxing the 1996 rule preventing its importation.

(4) Does the Government still consider **mifepristone** suitable for use in Australia:
(a) if not, why not; and (b) if so, how is it to be made available.

(5) Is the Government aware that **mifepristone** has emerged as promising treatment for certain breast cancers, ovarian cancer, meningioma, endometriosis, Cushing's syndrome, adrenal cancer, glaucoma, uterine fibroid tumours, induction of labour, cervical ripening and contraception. If so, how does the Government intend to make it available for people with these conditions.

(6) What are the guidelines for decision making in cases requiring Ministerial approval.

(7) What procedures has the Government established to ensure that Ministerial decisions are made on the basis of current scientific evidence.

(8) What, if any, other therapeutic drugs require Ministerial approval before they can be imported or registered in Australia.

(9) On what basis is the decision made to require Ministerial approval for the importation of drugs that have been deemed safe and effective.