

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

### WRITTEN QUESTION

Ms Purick to the Minister for Health:

#### **NT Pensioner and Carer Concession Scheme**

1. How many pensioners over the age of 55 are there living in the Northern Territory?

Statistical information regarding the number of pensioners over the age of 55 living in the Northern Territory is information of the Commonwealth Department of Health and Commonwealth Department of Veterans Affairs.

The Northern Territory Pensioner and Carer Scheme (the scheme) does not have access to this information.

2. What concessions are available to pensioners under the NT Pensioner and Carer Concession Scheme?

The concessions available under the scheme are:

- Electricity/Alternate Energy
- Local Council Property Rates
- Water Rates
- Sewerage Rates
- Garbage Charges
- Motor Vehicle Registration
- Drivers Licence
- Spectacles
- Public Transport
- Interstate/Overseas Travel — restricted to Senior Citizens, Aged Pensioners, Totally and Permanently Incapacitated Veterans and Aged War Service Veterans.

3. How many pensioners are accessing the scheme under the new arrangements brought in following the 2014 NT Budget?

As at 31 March 2016, there were 1835 pensioners who became members of the scheme, after the eligibility criteria changes came into effect on 14 May 2014.

Total membership numbers are as follows:

<b>Category</b>	<b>Membership Numbers as at 31 March 2016</b>
Carers	680
Post 14 May 2014 Pensioners	1,835
Pre 14 May 2014 Pensioners	22,131
<b>Total Number of Members</b>	<b>24,646</b>

4. What is the current cost to government of the pensioners accessing the scheme currently?

As at 31 March 2016, the cost to government of members accessing the scheme is \$19.3 million.

5. What was the cost saving to government of directing people to Centrelink to register for the scheme as detailed in the 2014 NT Budget?

The Department of Health does not know what the cost saving to government has been as a result of changes to the eligibility criteria. To undertake an analysis on cost savings to government would be extremely complex.

6. How many pensioners were disenfranchised when the scheme was changed such that people have to sign up with Centrelink to be eligible to attract concessions?

Existing members of the scheme were not disenfranchised, but were grandfathered. As at 31 March 2016, there were 22 131 grandfathered members.

Grandfathered members are:

- Senior Citizens (pre 14 May 2014)
- Centrelink Pensioners (pre 14 May 2014)
- Non-Pensioner Aged War Service (pre 14 May 2014)

An economic analysis would be required to understand how many members of the public who may have been eligible under the prior eligibility criteria were disenfranchised when the scheme changed in May 2014.

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