

Senate Community Affairs Committee
ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
SOCIAL SERVICES PORTFOLIO
2016-2017 Additional Estimates Hearings

Outcome Number: 3.1 Disability, Mental Health and Carers Question No: SQ17-000098

Topic: Moderate and High On-Going Support

Hansard page: Written

Senator Rachel Siewert asked:

Can you explain how Moderate and High On-Going Support works?

- a. What is the current level of spending under Moderate and High Ongoing Support?
- b. Will these components remain under the new DES?

Answer:

Ongoing Support is an element of the Disability Employment Services (DES) program that provides continuing support after a DES participant achieves sustained employment for 26 weeks. Ongoing Support is provided only to DES participants who require further support from their employment services provider to retain their employment, and is available for as long as required by the DES participant. DES participants who are able to work independently after 26 weeks are exited from the DES program and do not receive Ongoing Support.

Participants from both DES service streams – Disability Management Services and Employment Support Services - can access Flexible Ongoing Support, which allows a provider to deliver up to six instances of support within a six-month period, according to the needs of participants with irregular, episodic support requirements.

Participants in the DES Employment Support Service can receive Moderate and High levels of Ongoing Support. These levels provide regular and continuing workplace support, in recognition that DES Employment Support Service participants normally have permanent disability and are expected to require longer-term employment support.

Moderate Ongoing Support involves the provision of at least six contacts within a three month period, and High Ongoing Support provides at least 12 contacts within three months.

The support that is provided during Ongoing Support contacts is flexible, tailored to the individual DES participant's needs and delivered in accordance with the Ongoing Support Guidelines. Support can broadly include assistance with vocational, cognitive, social and behavioural matters, as well as physical assistance and personal care, workplace environment support, communication and other relevant support and assistance.

- a. Expenditure for the financial year 2015-16 included \$21.73 million for Moderate Ongoing Support and \$28.65 million for High Ongoing Support.
- b. The *New Disability Employment Services from 2018* Discussion Paper, canvassed possible changes to Ongoing Support. The Department is considering all feedback received in response to the discussion paper, in putting advice to Government on proposed program changes. The features of the program from 2018 onwards are subject to decision by Government.