

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: SQ17-000099

Topic: DES Discussion Paper

Hansard page: Written

Senator Rachel Siewert asked:

On Page 50 of the discussion paper *New Disability Employment Services from 2018* it states that “[t]he majority of DES participants placed in employment exit DES before having an Ongoing Support Assessment. This means around 2,000 people exit DES, per month, as independent workers, without being assessed for their need for additional support in the workplace.” Is this practice an effective use of the Ongoing Support component of DES?

Answer:

Under the current Disability Employment Service (DES) program, the determination about whether a participant requires Ongoing Support, after successfully completing 26 weeks of suitable employment, is made by the DES provider. This approach recognises that their close work with the participant allows them good insight into the participant’s further support needs.

Ongoing Support Assessments provide an independent assessment of a participant’s continuing need for Ongoing Support. The current DES program uses these assessments as a check to verify that the appropriate level of Ongoing Support is being provided, usually after the participant has successfully completed 48 or 72 weeks of employment.

The *New Disability Employment Services from 2018* discussion paper canvassed the possibility of using Ongoing Support Assessments to determine whether a participant requires Ongoing Support after successfully completing 26 weeks of employment.

In putting advice to Government on proposed program changes, the Department is considering all feedback received in response to discussion paper. The features of the program from 2018 onwards are subject to decision by Government.