

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: SQ17-000186

Topic: DES Discussion Paper - Ongoing Support

Hansard page: Written

Senator Carol Brown asked:

1. How much is currently spent on On-Going Support across DES and is Ongoing Support considered an outcome payment of the program? If not, why?
2. How does the new DES propose to increase expenditure on this part of the program?
3. Will all participants who reach a 26 week employment outcome be required to have an Ongoing Support Assessment under the proposed new DES? And consequentially, will Ongoing Support commence at 26 weeks of employment as a way of supporting participants to a 52 week outcome?
4. Providers say that the compliance and performance framework are reasons for the decline in take up of Ongoing Support – so how can the take up of Ongoing Support be increased, as it is a proven mechanism for people with disability staying in employment?

Answer:

1. In the 2015-16 financial year, \$53.5 million was spent on Ongoing Support in Disability Employment Services. Ongoing Support fees are not outcome payments. Ongoing Support fees are paid to DES providers once a participant has obtained an employment outcome to support the person to continue to be employed.

2-4. The *New Disability Employment Services from 2018 Discussion Paper* outlines a number of potential changes to the DES model, including in respect of Ongoing Support and possible incentives to achieve long-term outcomes that may influence the use of Ongoing Support. The features of the new program are subject to decision by Government.