

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

Outcome: National Disability Insurance Agency

Question No: NDIA SQ17-000041

Topic: Mental Health

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Siewert asked:

The response to question on notice 73 from Supplementary Budget Estimates 2016-17 included the statement that “[t]raditionally psychosocial disability support providers work to support people through their recovery journey.” Does the NDIA recognise that people with a mental illness in the NDIS will continue to require recovery oriented approaches and that the issue is having a workforce able to undertake this work?

- a. Given this, has there been any consideration to develop appropriate pricing for mental health rather than just for a general disability workforce, noting 13.9% of people in the NDIS having a mental illness does not make it less significant?
- b. Likewise, will quality assurance processes specifically tailored for psychosocial disability be developed as a part of the NDIS Quality and Safeguarding Framework?

Answer:

- a) The National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) accepts that ‘recovery’ in the context of support for those with psychosocial disability, is about achieving an optimal state of personal, social and emotional wellbeing, as defined by each individual, whilst living with or recovering from a mental health condition and that hope and optimism are important elements in recovery.

The key principles of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) align well with recovery (Recovery Orientated Approach). The NDIS provides:

- *Choice and control for participants:* The road to recovery is best judged by the participant. Support includes capacity building for self-management, including choosing supports and who provides supports.
- *A lifetime commitment to supports and funding as required:* Recovery is possible. The journey is personal and support when it is required is a key component of recovery.
- *Increased independence and social and economic participation:* Engaging with the community through social participation, education and employment helps build resilience and purpose. The NDIS is committed to funding supports to help participants increase their independence and social and economic participation.
- *Support for a partnership approach:* Support provided under the NDIS is disability focused and recovery oriented. It is connected to diverse supports as required.

The NDIA is working closely with the Mental Health sector to ensure there is understanding of the impact on their workforce. This transition is occurring across the general Disability sector and there is evidence that this is progressing in the Mental Health sector.

Additionally, the Sector Development Fund (administered by the Department of Social Services) provides significant assistance to mental health service providers to help with transition and sector development. The Mental Health Council is represented on the National Disability Services Innovative Workforce Fund.

b) Rather than being aligned with specific disability types, the NDIS Quality and Safeguarding Framework envisages a Registrar to administer tiered registration and quality assurance requirements proportionate to the potential risks posed by the supports the provider offers. The Registrar will also have a role in ensuring that the NDIS workforce has the right attitudes, knowledge and skills (through provider registration and quality assurance) to deliver services in an increasingly client centred and market driven environment. Quality and Safeguarding provider requirements covering these issues will be set out in practice standards that will be consistent with the National Mental Health Standards.