

Senate Community Affairs Committee
ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
FAMILIES, HOUSING, COMMUNITY SERVICES AND
INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS PORTFOLIO
2010-11 Supplementary Estimates Hearings

Outcome Number: 5

Question No: 177

Topic: Funding for Disability Service Providers

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Boyce asked:

Of the federal funding allocated to disability service providers, approximately 2/3rds is directed towards providing services for male clients. How does the federal government justify this allocation?

Answer:

At the end of March 2010, 18,780 people were accessing supported employment across Australia. Supported employees are predominantly male, with 64 per cent (12,096) male and 36 per cent (6,684) female.

It should be noted that approximately 70 per cent of supported workers in Australian Disability Enterprises have intellectual disability. The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare reported in their 2003 report, *Disability Prevalence and Trends*, that 'higher (male) prevalence (of intellectual disability) has been consistently reported at both regional and national levels in Australia...This higher male prevalence of intellectual disability has been reported for over 100 years'. In the same report, intellectual disability as the 'main disabling condition' was identified for 73,000 males as opposed to 30,000 females – of a total of 103,000 people with intellectual disability as the main disabling condition. Given the majority of supported workers have intellectual disability as their primary disability, the workforce reflects the broader gender characteristics of this population.