



Department of
Communities, Child Safety
and Disability Services

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16 APR 2015

Mr Mark Fitt
Committee Secretary
Australian Parliamentary Joint Standing Committee
on the National Disability Insurance Scheme
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Dear Mr Fitt

As the representative of the Queensland Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services, I gave oral evidence at the Parliamentary Joint Standing Committee on the National Disability Insurance Scheme (the Committee) Hearing, held in Brisbane on Friday 13 March 2015.

I advised the Committee I would provide additional information to questions taken on notice. Response to these questions, and additional information sought by the Committee, is provided below.

With regard to the number of Queenslanders with disability living in non-ideal settings; the most recent statewide census conducted by Queensland Health in August 2014, identified there were 242 long-stay people with disability aged between 18 and 65 years in Queensland Health facilities. At that time, there were 55 people in acute hospital facilities; 169 in extended care facilities; 18 in residential aged care facilities (this does not include private residential aged care facilities) and Multipurpose Health Services.

As to the Queensland Government investment in Sector Readiness activities, I am pleased to advise that some \$9.4 million has been allocated over 2013–2014 and 2014–2015, with approximately \$3.3 million allocated for provider support, and \$6.1 million for participant readiness.

In response to the Committee's inquiry about the department's experience with Your Life Your Choice and issues concerning workplace relations and families managing their own funding, including whether they could be considered a business, and their responsibilities and liabilities, I provide the following information.

In the implementation of Your Life Your Choice, the department has developed handbooks and guides around roles and responsibilities, including the role of the employer, and specific information about the termination of workers, and responding to abuse and neglect. These handbooks identify the applicability of workplace relations laws. Through these handbooks, and during contact with the department, people with disability and their families are firmly encouraged to ensure they obtain information and support about employing their own workers from their host provider, before deciding whether this is the right choice for them.

A range of additional resources for obtaining employment advice are provided to people who are considering receiving their funds directly from the department. In addition, the department also funded the development of resources, which provide further information and again, encourage people to seek advice through relevant bodies. These resources can be found at <http://pearl.staffingoptions.com.au/>.

Upon reviewing the transcript, I would also like to provide some additional information to the Committee to clarify issues raised.

Firstly, with regard to Queensland's Joint Action Plan and contact with the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) (refer to pages 23 and 24 of Hansard), I can advise Professor Karen Nankervis, Chair of the Queensland Government's Centre of Excellence for Clinical Innovation and Behaviour Support, has been working with the Australian Government and the NDIA, in relation to the principles to determine the responsibilities of the NDIS and other service systems; people with high and complex support needs; and safeguarding the rights of people with intellectual disability who are subject to restrictive practices. This includes people with disability who are inappropriately accommodated in long-stay hospital settings. The Centre of Excellence for Clinical Innovation and Behaviour Support oversees the implementation of the Joint Action Plan between Disability Services, the Department of Housing and Public Works, and Queensland Health, for transitioning younger people with disability out of long-stay hospital settings.

Professor Nankervis will continue to work with the Australian Government and the NDIA to provide advice and support in relation to how people with high and complex needs will be best supported under the NDIS. This will include lessons learnt from the implementation and evaluation of the Joint Action Plan.

In relation to the query regarding capital funding (refer to page 24 of Hansard), the allocation of \$6.6 million capital is continuing with the proposals being evaluated at present.

Additionally, with respect to the discussion of forensic detention at page 59–60, I can advise the Forensic Disability Service provides 24-hour medium secure accommodation based at Wacol, for up to 10 adults whom the Mental Health Court has made a Forensic Order (Mental Health Court – Disability). Such orders may be made by the Mental Health Court where the court has found the person to be of unsound mind or unfit to stand trial, as a result of intellectual disability. I would like to clarify there are approximately 44 people on Forensic Orders in Queensland, who are generally detained to Authorised Mental Health Services with varying degrees of Limited Community Treatment, while 10 people are detained to the Forensic Disability Service based at Wacol.

I would also like to correct some factual errors that I made in providing evidence as follows:

- There are approximately 45,000 people currently receiving disability services in Queensland, not 47,000, as stated on pages 49, 56 and 57 of the Hansard.
- The Reform Leaders Group membership comprises 10 Directors-General and Chief Executive Officers of departments and agencies, and the Public Guardian (refer to page 49 of Hansard).

Please find attached typographical corrections.

I would also like to draw to the attention of the Committee my multiple references to the Medicare Levy on page 55 which is contrary to the statements being made in the media in recent days.

Once again, thank you for the opportunity to address the Committee.

Consistent with established protocols if you require any further information or assistance in relation to this matter, please contact Mr Michael Hogan, Director-General, Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services on 07 3235 4310.

Yours sincerely


A.G. Hayes
Deputy Director-General

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16/4/15

