



Building better futures
for children with disabilities

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To Whom it May Concern,

Dr Kerry Bull and Suzy Green participated in the Inquiry into the provision of Assistive Technology Committee's hearing in Melbourne on 22nd November 2018 and were asked to provide further information

1. Significant delays in provision of Assistive Technology for a young child with Cerebral Palsy.

The request for alternative seating was submitted directly to the NDIA in January 2018. At the point of the request being submitted the child had already outgrown their existing seating system. This request was for a Leckey Mygo to allow the child to sit at the table for meal times and complete her homework. While the system does sit on a HiLo base with wheels, it does not perform the same functions as a wheelchair. There was no response to the NDIA despite repeated attempts by the family and therapist to follow up. At each point we were told that the application had been received but no information about timelines for approval were provided. The child's mother managed to gain further information from the NDIA and found out the application had been mislabelled as an application for a wheelchair and therefore denied. This was not communicated to either the family or the prescribing therapists until the family had followed up. A full review of the child's plan was then undertaken with the funding for the alternative seating included. Because of the lengthy delay between receiving the quote and the funding being approved (six months) the supplier needed to re-measure to check sizing was still appropriate. It then took around eight weeks from this point for the equipment to arrive because of the order process. The equipment was delivered in September: a nine-month delay.

2. An example of what you described as 'urgent equipment'?

Suzy Green responded "Urgent funding might be things required for transfers: if a carer or parent has injured themselves and the family require a hoist system very quickly, that would be urgent. Any orthotics: if an orthotic had broken and the child could not walk without the orthotic, that would be funded urgently. Even if the child was moving into their first AFO, that would be funded urgently. Currently there is a 12-month wait."

In addition to these items mentioned, urgent equipment might be;

- Hoist
- Sling
- Wheelchair
- Standing frame
- Walking frame
- Car seat
- Communication device

Each of the items above may be deemed urgent when required quickly for:

- Parental/carer/participant safety or to reduce risk of injury.
- When the participant requires the item in order to safely participate in their life.
- When the participants age or developmental stage requires assistive technology to facilitate learning.

Thank-you for the opportunity to provide further comment.

Kind regards,

Dr Kerry Bull
Senior Manager Services