

atWork Australia - Launceston, answers to questions on notice, 28 April 2021 (received 27 July 2021).

Questions:

Senator CAROL BROWN: I have a couple more questions, which you could follow up on notice. I am interested in whether, when people get employed, they stay in employment. You have talked about two people, and both did not stay with that employment. I am trying to get an understanding of the percentage of autistic people on your books who are able to gain employment and how long it takes to gain that employment. If you want to go away and have a closer look at some of those statistics, I would appreciate you providing us with that information and telling us whether, of the 120 or so clients who are currently on atWork's books, how many receive NDIS employment supports.

CHAIR: Could you maybe take on notice for me having a look at the number of people you've got entering your service who are coming—having had a diagnosis through school and perhaps early intervention—and with that young diagnosis are then ending up in your service post school versus those who are coming to your service without a diagnosis and looking for it? Obviously being a disability service there's got to be some awareness around it. What sort of percentage are we looking at that are pre-diagnosed as opposed to seeking a diagnosis?

I'm pretty good after that, to be honest. I think that's really where my area of interest lies. But perhaps if you could, just as one final thing for us just for our information, give us just a breakdown by industry or breakdown by sectors of where you're placing people and where you're having the most success. Is it going into IT? Is it going into hospitality? I've got to tell you, these are the two we seem to be hearing lots and lots about. Some are in IT. The ones that don't tend to be really good on the IT front seem to be really drawn to hospitality, whether it's as a chef or kitchen work or barista. Increasingly we're seeing an autistic adult that maybe has not an IT focus is drawn to that sort of employment opportunity. What sort of a breakdown can you provide for us? It can be sectors—it doesn't have to be company based—but where you're seeing most of these kids are going into and what are the more successful placements. And when I say 'success', I mean longer-term placements. That would be wonderful.

Answers:

Currently we have 274 clients that on our caseload looking for employment of those 12 have autism _ and have been with us for varying times We are unable to access correctly the number of the clients with NDIS funding but we would put the estimate to be approx. 50%

Our service delivery demands that we individualise our support to our clients therefore it is impossible to give a time frame for people commencing with us to the time they find employment _ this depends on the impact Autism has on the client, what supports are in place, how long it has been since diagnosis and the type of work suitable available in the area.

DES providers are not given medical records, these are supplied to Services Australia for the client application for Disability Support Pension or for and Employment Assessment.

Most industries depending on the client again but these areas are most successful

- IT in all fields
- Gardening
- Production work
- Data Entry

Those that cause a struggle for our clients include
Customer Focused activities, including retail (sales) and hospitality

