

## Senate Standing Committees on Community Affairs

### Assessment and support services for people with ADHD

#### QUESTION ON NOTICE

Date of hearing: 29 June 2023

**Outcome: Schools**

**Department of Education Question No. IQ23-000031**

Senator Jordon Steele-John on 29 June 2023, Proof Hansard page 44 - 45

#### ***Figures or data on the number of children with ADHD that are subject to school exclusions or refusals***

##### **Question**

Senator STEELE-JOHN: ...To the Department of Education then: in terms of school exclusions, are you able to give us any figures or data on the number of children with ADHD that are subject to school exclusions or for whom school refusal is a factor or a phenomenon?

Ms O'Connor: Great question. No, we're not able. With 'school exclusion', are you able to elaborate on the sort of—

Senator STEELE-JOHN: Of course. We had a number of witnesses share with us in their submissions earlier today that, upon their child finally attaining a diagnosis for ADHD, the school said, 'That's great; they're no longer welcome at the school,' and decided no longer to provide them with education. If there is any data around that, that's what I was meaning in relation to 'exclusion'. The phenomenon of school refusal, I'm assuming, is more well known to the department.

Ms O'Connor: Thanks for clarifying. In terms of school exclusion, we do not have data that would give us insights around that. Certainly the requirements under the act and through the standards are ensuring that schools provide an inclusive environment for all students, including students with a disability and students with ADHD. That would be the expectation. We can certainly take on notice if there is any form of information that may assist to offer further insights, but I don't believe we've got data on the exclusions. In terms of school refusals, this is obviously an area of great interest to us. Of course we're aware of the Senate inquiry into school refusal, which we also appeared before. What is currently missing in that space is data that identifies the reasons for students not attending school. We don't have any form of national data that helps to inform us in terms of the reasons for school refusal. That is a current gap in information.

##### **Answer**

The department does not hold data on the number of children with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) that are subject to school exclusions or for whom school refusal is a factor.