

RIDBC – Australia’s largest non government service provider for hearing and vision

SCIC – Australia’s largest cochlear implant program

6000 Australian’s served each year

155 years old

Oldest disability service provider

Services in education, health, disability and specialist professional education

Hearing services environment is a mix of

Government

Private

Not for Profit

Total service doesn’t exist in any one model, collective efforts gets a child or adult to success

Australian’s with hearing health needs is increasing, particularly with our aging population

Australia has a good supply of hearing technologies, access (physical and financial) and awareness are issues.

NDIS may have a broader capture than the CSO market and will give contestability and client choice in most developed areas. Market failure is likely in remote and rural environments.

Equally an NDIS challenges the client to know what they need to know and this is a complex space. There will be many new entrants to hearing health environment and the client is left making decisions on service provision and options

Vulnerable clients may become more vulnerable under an NDIS

Australian Hearing’s role in capture of children from newborns screening to service options ensures appropriate uptake of intervention. If Australian Hearing is not to exist or be privatised in a fully contestable market place preserving Australia’s track record of diagnosis through to intervention will be important.

Whilst Australia is the natural homeland of the world’s best cochlear implant, uptake rates are as low as 8% in adults indicating a reluctance to step forward for hearing health needs, a lack of access to CI programs, conversion issues from hearing aid providers, and general awareness challenges. Funding for cochlear implants is discretionary state by state.

RIDBC is a non-competitive organisation that is building the ‘total service model’ in required locations around Australia. This is done in partnership with other service providers and allows for the length and breadth of service needs to be met. Leveraging important infrastructure like Australian Hearing has for services inclusive of CI, EI and Adult rehabilitation enables a more sustainable model whilst improving access where market failure or compromise exists.

Hearing loss is a treatable condition when all the required components are available from diagnosis onwards.