

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Additional Estimates 2015 - 2016, 10 February 2016

Ref No: SQ16-000091

OUTCOME: 11 – Ageing and Aged Care

Topic: Aged Care and Disability Interface

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Senator: Siewert, Rachel

Question:

In relation to individuals with a disability who are eligible for support through My Aged Care:

- a) Does the government consider the provision of disability supports under the My Aged Care system to be discriminatory towards older Australians with disability, given that it appears to allow significantly less flexibility in package size and management than the NDIS as well as a distinct focus on co-payment not evident in the NDIS?
- b) There are various government agreements – such as the National Health Reform Agreement (Schedule F) - and policy principles, such as those underlying interface work for the NDIS which speak about equality across both the NDIS and aged care systems for people with disability. How is this equality being actively enforced and measured?
- c) What measures are being put in place to ensure that people with disability are provided with adequate NDIS supports after they turn 65 so that aged care supports are only accessed when they are truly appropriate and truly the choice of the person?
- d) What statistics are available on the number of people with disability accessing the aged care system, by disability type and jurisdiction?
- e) Please provide these statistics.

Answer:

- a) The Department of Health does not consider the provision of supports under the aged care system to be discriminatory towards older Australians with disability. The Productivity Commission recommended an age 65 threshold for entry to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), stating that people should get the care they need in the aged care or the disability system, and that there should not be duplication between systems. The aged care system is aimed at meeting the needs of older people and aged care providers are required by law under the *Aged Care Act 1997* to meet the person's needs.
- b) The *Intergovernmental Agreement for the National Disability Insurance Scheme* Launch commits the Commonwealth and States and Territories to continuity of support arrangements for people with disability who currently receive support but do not meet the access requirements outlined in the *National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013*. This ensures that they are not disadvantaged in the transition to the NDIS and is being implemented through:

- Continuity of Support (CoS) Programme available to people from 1 July 2016 to provide continuity of support to people aged 65 years and over, or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 50 years and over, who are currently in receipt of state-administered specialist disability services and are not eligible for the NDIS. The CoS Programme will ensure that people receive support to achieve similar outcomes to their previous supports.
 - Aged Care available to people that acquire a disability aged 65 years and over, or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 50 years and over. The aged care system is aimed at meeting the needs of older people and aged care providers are required by law under the *Aged Care Act 1997* to meet the person's needs.
- c) The NDIS is a scheme to address the chronic unmet needs of people with significant non age-related disabilities. The scheme is not intended to replace the health or aged care systems. The NDIS reflects the Productivity Commission's recommendation that a person needs to have acquired their disability before the age of 65 and meet other eligibility criteria in order to be an NDIS participant. However, after a participant passes the age of 65 they have the option of continuing to receive their supports through the NDIS or of choosing the aged care system.
- d) The Department does not collect information on the number of people accessing the aged care system by disability type. However, there is information available on the number of younger people aged under 65 years (or Indigenous Australians aged under 50 years) accessing Australian Government subsidised aged care.
- e) Available statistics on the number of younger people aged under 65 years (and Indigenous Australians aged under 50) in the aged care system by jurisdiction is provided below. It is assumed that the majority of these younger people would have a disability of some sort.

Number of younger people in Australian Government subsidised aged care
(30 June 2015)

State	Residential care (permanent & respite)	Home Care Packages	Transition Care	HACC (2014–15)
NSW	2,343	504	49	49,744
VIC	1,595	753	50	69,506
QLD	1,225	416	46	37,203
WA	523	195	12	14,063
SA	455	77	<5	19,474
TAS	155	36	<5	5,846
ACT	62	33	<5	3,465
NT	57	165	0	233
Australia	6,415	2,179	164	199,534
Total people in Aged Care (all ages)	177,820	59,506	3,575	1,021,023

Notes: Excludes people in Multi-purpose services, National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Flexible Aged Care services and Innovative Care services.

Source: '2014–15 Report on the Operation of the *Aged Care Act 1997*', unpublished data from the Aged Care Data Warehouse and HACC data from the '2016 Report on Government Services', Table 14A.149.