

**Senate Community Affairs Committee**

**ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**HEALTH PORTFOLIO**

**Additional Estimates 2015 - 2016, 10 February 2016**

**Ref No: SQ16-000104**

**OUTCOME:** 11 – Ageing and Aged Care

**Topic:** Disability

**Type of Question:** Written Question on Notice

**Senator:** Polley, Helen

**Question:**

- a) What supports are offered to people with disability in the Commonwealth Home Support Program and Home Care Packages to address disabilities, as opposed to age-related health issues?
- b) What support is available for people who are blind or vision impaired? Can they access services provided by organisations such as Guide Dogs Australia, Vision 2020 etc?
- c) How much flexibility is in the services and packages to meet the needs of people with non-age related conditions such as Motor Neurone Disease?
- d) Please outline the extent of collaboration with the disability sector and DSS to meet the needs of older Australians living with disability.

**Answer:**

- a) The Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP) is the entry level to the aged care system which provides \$1.6 billion annually for services to frail, older people living in the community to maximise their independence. There are many supports available through the CHSP to older people to address their disability needs. These include transport services, domestic assistance, personal care, home modifications, goods, equipment and assistive technology as well as allied health services. In addition the CHSP service type of 'Specialised Support Services' includes support and assistance for older people who are living at home with a particular disability such as vision impairment.

The Home Care Package Programme provides care services for older people with complex care needs including people with disabilities. Home care packages (HCPs) are delivered on a Consumer Directed Care (CDC) basis. This provides the consumer with choice and flexibility in how and what services they want to include in their HCP. Services are tailored to addressing an individual's needs and goals regardless of whether those needs arise because of age or disability. HCPs can, for example, include aids and appliances where these are identified in the consumer's care plan.

- b) The CHSP provides for specific support to older people who are blind or vision impaired. As noted above, HCPs are based on individual needs. If the HCP care plan

identifies specific needs and the consumer requests specific organisations to deliver, these can be brokered by the HCP provider on behalf of the consumer.

- c) HCP and CHSP provide services for older consumers. Non age related conditions, such as Motor Neurone Disease (MND), are considered as part of the assessment for eligibility and the development of the care plan.

CHSP is an entry level programme that provides a basic range of services for older consumers to stay at home and includes allied health and nursing services. Depending on the need of the consumer these services could be used flexibly.

Home care packages provide choice and flexibility for consumers to tailor their package of care to their specific needs. Whilst the funding should not be used for Medicare rebateable items, consumers with conditions such as MND can tailor services to meet their needs as identified in their care plan.

- d) The Departments of Health and Social Services collaborate formally through regular, high level aged care and disability interface meetings and also through informal channels on the needs of older Australians living with disability, and on opportunities to align the aged care and disability systems.

The Department of Health is also working with the aged care sector to build their capacity to deliver high quality, client-centred care including to clients with specialised needs due to disability.