

Senate Community Affairs Committee
ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
FAMILIES, HOUSING, COMMUNITY SERVICES AND
INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS PORTFOLIO
2013-14 Budget Estimates Hearings

Outcome Number: 5

Question No: 231

Topic: DisabilityCare

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Siewert asked:

The "DisabilityCare Australia, May 2013" distributed alongside the Budget Papers at p16 identifies that a "Sector Development Fund: will assist to prepare the disability sector, community and individuals for DisabilityCare Australia. It will be used to fund activities including transition support, workforce planning and development, and support for service quality and innovation". What kind of assistance does the Department anticipate that an individual with intellectual or cognitive disability will receive? How does the Government anticipate that an individual, for example, living with intellectual disability, living on the Disability Support Pension, will be practically able to prepare for an appeal in the AAT?

Answer:

The Sector Development Fund will fund activities that will prepare the sector to effectively support individuals through the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

What kind of assistance does the Department anticipate that an individual with intellectual or cognitive disability will receive?

Individuals will receive assistance from DisabilityCare Australia to increase independence in the community and if possible assistance to access employment. This support will be funded directly through Disability Care's Individual Package of Support Funds and facilitating access to mainstream programs where appropriate, rather than through the Sector Development Fund.

The actual types of supports will very much depend on the manner in which the person's disability affects their ability to function independently in the community.

DisabilityCare operates on an individualised approach to selection of supports that will enable a person to achieve their goals.

How does the Government anticipate that an individual, for example, living with intellectual disability, living on the Disability Support Pension, will be practically able to prepare for an appeal in the AAT?

It is not expected that many people would need to approach the AAT as supports will be readily available through the DisabilityCare Agency and any problems that a participant encounters will usually be managed directly by the Agency.

If, however, a person wishes to seek a review of an Agency decision by the AAT, the Government has provided support for persons with disability who wish to appeal DisabilityCare Australia decisions in the AAT. This includes funding to selected National Disability Advocacy Program agencies for the provision of a support person to assist applicants seeking external merits review in the AAT. This will ensure that the review system is accessible and supportive for people with disability.