

**Senate Community Affairs Committee**  
**ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**  
**SOCIAL SERVICES PORTFOLIO**  
**2015-16 Budget Estimates Hearings**

**Outcome Number: 5.2 National Disability Insurance Scheme    Question No: SQ15-000562**

**Topic: NDIS**

**Hansard page: Written**

**Senator Moore asked:**

1. What is the quantum of funding over the forwards allocated to NDIS housing?
2. How will this be administered and allocated across the trial sites?
3. What type of housing will be supported under this funding?
4. What is the estimated housing need of participants in the NDIS?
5. How much of the need will the current approach to housing support the need?

**Answer:**

1. There is no funding allocated specifically to housing under the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

As envisaged by the Productivity Commission, funding for accommodation related supports for the small proportion of NDIS participants with very high needs is included in participant packages.

Policy development and costing work being undertaken in collaboration between the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA), Commonwealth, state and territory governments will inform how this resourcing can best be leveraged from within package funding to address existing need and to encourage new supply of innovative and quality housing for NDIS participants.

The current estimate of the amount of 'User Cost of Capital' funding included in funding for participant packages for accommodation related supports at full Scheme in 2019-20 is around \$700 million.

2. No decisions have yet been taken on how NDIS funding for accommodation related costs will be allocated or administered across the trial sites. However, it would be reasonable to expect that a significant proportion of the funds will need to be allocated to participants currently in State-funded disability accommodation services or Commonwealth-funded residential aged care facilities.

At the Council of Australian Governments Disability Reform Council (DRC) meeting of 24 April 2015, Ministers agreed to Commonwealth, state and territory officials working with the NDIA to test options for expanding the supply of appropriate and sustainable integrated housing models in trial sites with sufficient funds available to support meaningful activity.

This work is underway, with recommendations expected to be considered at a future meeting of DRC and to inform further policy work on housing responses under the NDIS.

3. Foundational policy decisions on accommodation related costs under the NDIS remain to be settled before decisions can be taken on the types of housing models that will be supported. However, it is expected that funding will be directed both to existing models and to innovative new supply over time; following the NDIS principle of choice and control for participants. The work to test options for expanding the supply of appropriate and sustainable integrated housing models in trial sites, commissioned by Ministers at the DRC meeting of 24 April 2015, will provide useful data in this respect.

4. NDIS funding includes accommodation related costs ('user cost of capital') for a small proportion of NDIS participants with very high support needs. Most participants will continue to have their accommodation needs addressed through mainstream housing systems, with supports to navigate these service systems provided through the NDIS where necessary.

When the Productivity Commission produced its Disability Care and Support report, it expected that the specialised disability housing provided with state and territory funding would continue for people with very high support needs, and that it would continue to be subsidised (in future by the NDIA). This subsidy was labelled as the 'user cost of capital' to describe accommodation related costs.

However, the Productivity Commission only saw this funding role in respect of a very small proportion of high needs NDIS participants. Even with a significant expansion of the current supply of accommodation support arrangements, the Commission estimated that under 7 per cent of participants would receive funding in their support package for ongoing accommodation related costs.

Under the direction of DRC, further work is being undertaken by Commonwealth and state and territory governments to better understand the level and type of housing requirements for NDIS participants. This work will inform policy decisions on how NDIS funding will support existing need and incentivise new supply.

5. In line with the Productivity Commission's scoping of need for specialist disability accommodation under the NDIS, Commonwealth, state and territory governments are developing a housing policy response for the small proportion of NDIS participants with very high support needs who require an integrated accommodation and care package.

This policy work is being done within the framework of housing policy directions set by the DRC meeting on 24 April 2015, recognising that:

- the NDIS would support the capital costs of specialist disability housing;
- there is a need to expand the supply of specialist disability housing;
- there is a need to continue supporting the current stock of such housing;
- mainstream housing systems (including social housing and Commonwealth Rent Assistance) would be responsible for NDIS participants who do not need a specialist response; and
- where NDIS contributes to an individual's ongoing housing costs, it will need to cover the lifecycle cost of the accommodation, taking into account a reasonable contribution from the participant.

For most participants, their accommodation needs will continue to be addressed through mainstream housing systems, either in the private market or through community and public rental housing schemes. If reasonable and necessary, the NDIA can help participants to navigate these systems to obtain and maintain their housing arrangements. It can also help participants make home modifications, and it can coordinate NDIS supports with the housing and other relevant service systems. Participants will continue to receive support from other government programs including public housing and Commonwealth Rent Assistance.