

Senate Community Affairs Committee
ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
SOCIAL SERVICES PORTFOLIO
2015 - 2016 Budget Estimates Hearings

Outcome: National Disability Insurance Agency

Question No: NDIA SQ15-000067

Topic: NDIS | WA My Way Comparison

Hansard Page: CA 131

Senator McLucas asked:

For the WA trial could I get a table that provides a comparison between the two different trial methodologies or the trial sites against the different way that local area coordinators are compared to the My Way coordinator; how they operate differently, if they do; what is the process for identification of participants and support provided to develop individual plans; what the support for families and carers in the two different trial sites might look like; the difference between developing community linkages—when I say 'difference', we do not know if there is much difference, but that is what we are trying to find out; and support for disability service providers in the two systems.

Answer:

Attachment A refers to a response the National Disability Insurance Agency drafted and has previously provided to the Parliamentary Joint Standing Committee on the National Disability Insurance Scheme from the Committee's 9 April 2015 public hearing in the Perth Hills trial site: *Provide a summary of NDIS features in comparison to the Western Australian NDIS My Way Scheme.*

NDIS WA My Way and NDIS Perth Hills: Points of Similarity and Difference

<p>NDIS My Way Features</p> <p>Unless otherwise stated, information relating to My Way features is derived from statements made by My Way representatives at the Joint Standing Committee public hearing at Midland Town Hall on 9 April 2015 (as recorded in Hansard).</p>	<p>NDIS Perth Hills Features</p> <p>Information relating to Perth Hills features is provided by the Trial Site Manager.</p>
<p>Model – Structural and Operational</p> <p>The My Way model is built on over 20 years’ experience of implementing LAC and My Way models in WA.</p> <p>The My Way model has two components: Structural and Operational</p>	<p>Perth Hills trial site Model</p> <p>The Perth Hills model is one of a number of models being trialled around Australia to determine the best features to include in the full Scheme rollout of the NDIS. A number of features were informed by previous approaches used in WA.</p> <p>The approach continues to evolve in response to identified participant, provider, community and mainstream issues and gaps identified during the trial period.</p> <p>The NDIS is an insurance scheme based on insurance principles. This means there is an investment made over a lifetime and this includes capacity building and early intervention as a focus.</p>
<p>Structural Elements – NDIS My Way</p> <p>Prices lie within a pricing band developed in consultation with providers as part of WA state reform prior to the introduction of NDIS.</p>	<p>NDIS Perth Hills – response</p> <p>Interim prices are fixed during the trial period. It is expected that they will transition to market prices as the NDIS matures.</p>
<p>Prices are slightly more generous than those of the NDIS Perth Hills.</p>	<p>Perth Hills prices are based on South Australian prices – it is not possible for the NDIA to comment on the extent to which pricing differs.</p>
<p>Providers are paid quarterly in advance.</p>	<p>Providers make a claim after providing a service and are paid within 24 hours. Participants who self-manage all or part of their plan will be paid one month in advance directly into their bank accounts.</p>

<p>The average package costs are believed to be lower (than the Perth Hills) as participants do not use as many funded services.</p>	<p>Information from the respective Quarter 3 reports show average package costs of \$24,508 for My Way compared to \$33,657 for the NDIS. Caution is advised on this data as there are differences in the demographics of the Perth Hills and the My Way trial sites which may contribute to cost variations. My Way participants were transitioned with their current July 2014 plans and since review within the NDIS framework additional supports have been provided and the average package cost has increased. Progressive inclusion of in-kind supports is also likely to impact on total costs for some plans.</p>
<p>Around 30 per cent of plans are in the self-managed domain.</p>	<p>The NDIA has a strong focus on capacity building and for many people this involves additional services to assess and provide recommendations for increasing independence and community inclusion. The purpose is to improve outcomes and decrease long term cost. This is a likely contributor to NDIS plans having more funded services in first plans.</p> <p>Quarter 3 data shows self-management and a combination of self and agency management has increased from 26 per cent to 33 per cent</p>
<p>Technical support is provided to people who self-manage.</p>	<p>Participants who wish to self-manage are invited to one or more of a suite of information sessions.</p>
<p>WA's Individualised Services (WAiS) have developed self-management tools.</p>	<p>Participants who need ongoing support to self-manage can be funded to access accounting and HR advice through their plan. WAiS are a valued source of information.</p> <p>The NDIA is about to release a suite of detailed guides containing information and links to assist self-management.</p>

<p>Operational Elements – NDIS My Way</p> <p>My Way Coordinators:</p> <p>Provide a single point of contact to participants as they develop, implement and review plans.</p>	<p>NDIS Perth Hills – Response</p> <p>Planning and Support Coordinators (PSCs) provide a single point of contact as participants develop, implement and review plans. Depending on participant need, extent of informal supports and personal capacity, the PSC role can be complemented by a range of supports funded within a plan including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support Connection and Support Coordination services; • mentoring; and • supports to assist with plan management.
<p>Assist participants to explore informal and community supports before ‘driving them toward funded supports’.</p>	<p>PSCs also assist participants to explore and enhance informal, community and mainstream supports as they develop their plan.</p>
<p>Link participants to community and informal supports, advocate on their behalf and create networks rather than pay individualised services.</p>	<p>For participants who need advocacy and/or linking to community and networks, a support connector or coordinator is funded as part of the plan with emphasis on building the participant’s capacity to develop their own networks over time if possible.</p>
<p>Take as long as participants need to develop a plan – there is generally a longer pre-planning phase and more community linking.</p>	<p>PSCs generally provide between one and three sessions to develop a plan. This has been largely due to the need to meet bilateral targets within a newly developing trial site. In response to this context: Participants are strongly encouraged to attend a pre-planning information session to assist them to prepare for planning and to understand the NDIS.</p> <p>PSCs are able to fund Personal Futures Planning, which provides a longer and in-depth planning process for participants who have complex and changing life circumstances.</p>
<p>Acknowledge that some people do not need ongoing follow-up until meeting at the annual review. Others need ongoing coordination support from My Way Coordinators.</p>	<p>Support Coordination is available for participants who need ongoing support to coordinate the informal, community, mainstream and disability services in their life.</p>
<p>Respect and act on the wishes of people who need or want to access paid supports.</p>	<p>As for My Way.</p>
<p>The ratio of My Way Coordinators to participants is between 1:40 and 1:50.</p>	<p>During the initial phasing there is not a designated ratio for individual PSCs. As the focus shifts from plan development to implementation there is an ongoing connection with the PSC and/or the team Business Support Officer and potentially a funded Support Coordinator.</p>

<p>Allow providers into the planning meetings and stated they have found no evidence of provider self-interest.</p>	<p>As for My Way. Perth Hills also facilitates advocates and previous Local Area Coordinators (LACs) or My Way coordinators to support a participant in the planning meeting.</p>
<p>Review plans annually, however people can seek changes to their plan when there are significant changes in circumstances.</p>	<p>As for My Way.</p>
<p>Note that the following information was provided in public forums: participant goals are developed with My Way Coordinators the participant takes the plan to providers to develop and cost strategies the plan returns to the My Way Coordinator for final approval.</p>	<p>Under the NDIS, the PSC works with the participant to develop goals and strategies (informal, community, mainstream and funded) to determine the extent to which they wish to self-manage and approves the plan.</p> <p>An implementation pack is posted to the participant and a range of plan implementation and self-management information sessions are offered. The participant contacts and selects providers or self-managed supports. Assistance is provided if required.</p> <p>The PSC follows up within two weeks to check progress with plan implementation.</p> <p>If a support connector or coordinator is funded, the PSC meets with the participant and support coordinator to clarify roles and progress monitoring.</p> <p>Participants and other stakeholders receive six-weekly local news updates from the trial site.</p>

<p>Overall effectiveness of NDIS My Way</p> <p>The My Way model is showing greater effectiveness due to: the elements of the model (listed above) – in particular the strong and continual relationship with a My Way Coordinator who links people to informal supports and community</p> <p>NDIS My Way being built:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • on a foundation of 20 years’ experience of LAC and My Way; • within a state that has already introduced a high degree of individualised funding and approaches; and • within a state with sound provider relationships. <p>Hansard page 11, Dr Chalmers: ‘We have put a lot of work into Cockburn-Kwinana over the past 12 months, knowing that this was coming, to the point where we now have 600 individuals who are basically in the scheme even though formally they are not in the scheme. The majority of those people also have well-developed plans.’</p>	<p>NDIS Perth Hills – response</p> <p>Note from the comments made by Dr Chalmers in Hansard that at least one year of preparation was invested in the Cockburn-Kwinana site prior to launching including the development of plans ready to roll into the NDIS.</p> <p>It is understood that a similar amount of intensive lead up occurred in the Lower South West My Way trial site. This is a variable that is important to consider when considering the efficacy of the models – My Way Coordinators had a substantially longer lead up time to connect people to informal supports and community and to develop their plan. The benefit of early contact to develop community supports and offer pre planning sessions has also been very clear from all the Trial Sites and is being built into the Service Delivery Operating Model for full Scheme.</p> <p>While some participants in the Perth Hills trial site had a long history of contact with LACs and a more recent focus on developing plans for most people, these have not been found to have a strong focus on capacity building or the full range of reasonable and necessary supports.</p>
<p>NDIS My Way - Relationship with providers</p> <p>The relationship of NDIS My Way with providers is strong in WA due to the historical context and due to My Way features, for example My Way pays in advance rather than in arrears and service providers have direct access to the Director General of DSC.</p>	<p>NDIS Perth Hills – response</p> <p>The Perth Hills trial site also has a strong relationship with providers. Around 130 providers are registered and more will be confirmed soon.</p> <p>The trial site works closely with peak bodies and advocacy groups including National Disability Services, People with Disability WA, Developmental Disability WA, WA Association of Mental Health and Early Childhood Intervention Association.</p> <p>Regular workshops and information sessions are offered to develop sector capacity and understanding of the NDIS.</p>

<p>NDIS My Way - Decision-making</p> <p>Dr Chalmers inferred that decision-making in relation to the NDIS Perth Hills Trial Site is centralised. He stated –</p> <p>‘I do not think we would ever welcome a scheme where we were having to defer important decisions to thousands of kilometres away’.</p> <p>‘Service providers have access to me. Individuals and families have access to me if they want it. So local decision-making at individual plan level, right the way through to more fundamental things that are happening within a community, still rests within our system here. We do not have to defer to the east for micro, middle level or major level issues’.</p>	<p>NDIS Perth Hills – response</p> <p>Trial site Manager, Marita Walker, responded –</p> <p>‘I welcome the opportunity to say a bit about where decisions are made. In terms of our administration and decision-making about reasonable and necessary supports for individuals here in WA, all of those decisions are delegated here to WA. None is referred elsewhere. So, if there is a decision about someone who is unhappy with the reasonable and necessary decision, that internal review is our responsibility. Of course, if people are still unhappy then the next step is the AAT.</p> <p>For decisions in relation to matters of the scheme as a whole, in terms of pricing, I do not have that delegation. It is a national scheme and there is a national area of responsibility to do that.’</p>
<p>NDIS My Way - Evaluation of NDIS My Way and Perth Hills</p> <p>The WA evaluation of the two trial sites will determine the features of the most appropriate model for WA’s future.</p>	<p>NDIS Perth Hills - response</p> <p>The WA evaluation will be considering the features of the NDIA trial at a particular point in time; however, as trial lessons are learnt both locally and nationally changes are being made to processes and practices.</p> <p>The Service Delivery Operating Model currently being developed by the NDIA will incorporate these lessons. In addition, the implementation of the Information, Linkages and Capacity Building policy currently being finalised for full Scheme will be of benefit to many people who need different or periodic types of support models.</p>