

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Budget Estimates 2017 - 2018, 30 May 2017

Ref No: SQ17-000899

OUTCOME: 2 - Health Access and Support Services

Topic: NDIS Funding

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Senator: O'Neill, Deborah

Question:

In relation to NDIS funding, the Department of Social Services confirmed in Budget Estimates that it is due to deliver on a Continuity of Support Strategy that will be presented to the Minister by the end of the calendar year. As the Department of Health is responsible for the \$80 million funding allocation in the 2017-18 Budget and for people with a mental health illness who will not be eligible for the NDIS and as confirmed by the Department of Social Services in Budget Estimates that the "Department of Health has the lead on mental health at a Commonwealth level" is there any strategic work being undertaken to ensure there is continuity of support? If yes, can the Department provide details in relation to this work. If there is not any work being undertaken, why not? Looking beyond the transition phase after 2019, what strategic work is the Department of Health undertaking in relation to people who are yet to be supported by programs such as Partners in Recovery or Day to Day Living who are living with a mental health illness and who will not be eligible for the NDIS? If no work is being undertaken, why is this the case?

Answer:

In the 2017-18 Budget the Government committed \$80 million over four years for community mental health services to assist people with severe mental illness resulting in psychosocial disability who are not eligible for assistance through the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). The additional Commonwealth investment will be delivered once agreements have been reached with appropriate commitments from each State and Territory.

The Department of Social Services (DSS) has primary policy responsibility for the Commonwealth Continuity of Support (CoS) commitment. The department is working closely with DSS to determine how the Commonwealth community mental health CoS commitment is implemented from 1 July 2019.

Commonwealth program clients who are not deemed eligible for the NDIS will continue to receive supports. During the NDIS transition period this will be achieved through existing program structures and services. Longer term arrangements beyond transition will be made in the light of experience in the trial and transition phases.