

**Senate Community Affairs Committee**  
**ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**  
**FAMILIES, HOUSING, COMMUNITY SERVICES AND**  
**INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS PORTFOLIO**  
**2012-13 Supplementary Estimates Hearings**

**Outcome Number:** 5

**Question No:** 486

**Topic:** NDIS

**Hansard Page:** Written

**Senator Di Natale** asked:

"Further, the Department advised following Budget Estimates this year that 'detailed planning is underway to ensure that once the NDIS is operating there will be a range of access strategies in place to meet the needs of people from a CALD background' (answer to Budget Estimates QoN 340). a) How does the Department intend to ensure its access strategies are effective in reaching CALD communities? b) Will the Department be consulting with CALD representatives to inform the development of its access strategies, and if so, when? c) How will the Department evaluate its NDIS access strategies, once they are in place?"

**Answer:**

- a) The Agency understands the importance of ensuring that Scheme operations are culturally appropriate in line with community expectations and the COAG principle on ensuring equity of access for people from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) backgrounds. This principle will be addressed through planning in each launch locations to understand the needs of CALD people and by ensuring that the Agency staff members are trained and culturally competent in dealing with people from diverse cultures.
- b) The Agency is using a phased approach to engagement with a specific focus on launch locations. As the Agency establishes regional teams in each of the launch locations, it will work with relevant state governments to identify locally based CALD stakeholder groups for engagement.

Sessions are likely to be scheduled in the second quarter of 2013.

- c) The Agency will have a rolling program of continuous improvement where feedback from clients will be sought on Agency performance. This will include aspects such as understanding and awareness of the needs of people from CALD backgrounds. The National Evaluation Strategy will also examine short and longer-term outcomes of the NDIS including the experience of people with disability, their families and carers in being supported through the first stage.