

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

Question No: SQ15-000914

Outcome Number: 5.2 National Disability Insurance Scheme

Topic: NDIS

Hansard page: Written

Senator Jan McLucas asked:

1. Has the department provided advice as to the most appropriate way to continue supporting people with mental health issues that will not qualify for the NDIS?
2. Can the department guarantee that there will not be a loss of services for people with mental health issues that do not qualify for the NDIS?

Answer:

1. All Governments, through the Council of Australian Governments (COAG), have committed to providing continuity of support to people with disability currently receiving supports but who will be ineligible for the NDIS to ensure that they are not disadvantaged during transition.
2. In trial, people with mental health issues who do not qualify for the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) will continue to be supported through existing programmes. In transition, the Department is exploring a range of approaches to support people with mental health issues who will not qualify for the NDIS. The Department will provide advice to Government once these have been determined.

This work will progress through a number of channels. People currently receiving mental health services that are not eligible for the NDIS may be able to get support through Information, Linkages and Capacity Building (ILC). In addition, Government supports for people with mental health form part of the Government's response to the Report of the National Mental Health Commission on its National Review of Mental Health Programmes and Services (the Review).

The Commonwealth Department of Health will also be working with other Commonwealth Departments and state and territory Governments to develop a new National Mental Health Plan (the Fifth Plan), through a working group under the Council of Australian Governments' Health Council. The Fifth Plan will help guide reform of the mental health system and improve the outcomes for people with mental illness.

Governments, through COAG, have also agreed to mainstream interface principles for the delivery responsibilities of the NDIS and other systems for people with disability. This will ensure that these systems continue to provide support to people with disability.

In line with these principles, diagnostic and treatment services will continue to be delivered by the health and mental health services. This may include early intervention and rehabilitation services.

The NDIS will be responsible for ongoing psychosocial recovery supports that focus on a person's functional ability that enable the person to participate in the community.

As such, the NDIS will complement the supports provided through the mental health system by addressing the functional impact of a person's psychosocial disability.

Further there is a commitment from Governments to work together at the local level to plan and coordinate streamlined care for individuals requiring health or mental health and disability services recognising that both may be required at the same time, or where there is a need to ensure a smooth transition from one to the other.

Governments have agreed that people with disability, including those with psychosocial disability, who are currently receiving supports but who are ineligible for the National Disability Scheme (NDIS) will not be disadvantaged. In these cases, governments will continue to support them outside of the NDIS either through continuing these programmes or by alternative arrangements.