

**Senate Community Affairs Committee**  
**ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**  
**SOCIAL SERVICES PORTFOLIO**  
**2016 – 2017 Supplementary Budget Estimates Hearings**

**Outcome:** National Disability Insurance Agency

**Question No:** NDIA SQ16-000038

**Topic:** Hearing Services

**Hansard Page:** Written

**Senator Siewert,** asked:

The National Disability Insurance Scheme has a minimum level of hearing loss required before one can access the program. Did the National Disability Insurance Agency consult with Office of Hearing Services in regards to setting the level for accessing its service?

**Answer:**

The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) does not currently have a minimum level of hearing loss for access to the scheme.

A '45dB' audiometric criteria is described in the Operational Guideline '*Access to the NDIS List D - Permanent Impairment/Early intervention, under 7 years – no further assessment required*'. The 45 dB level was intended to reflect the equivalent 40dB eligibility criteria for the 'Better Start' and 'Helping Children with Autism' programs which are Commonwealth programs transitioning to the NDIS.

Sector stakeholders have indicated that guidance about audiometric criteria would assist the sector to better understand and respond to access considerations. The National Disability Insurance Agency is currently developing and evaluating audiometric criteria. The Office of Hearing Services and other stakeholders are involved in that process.