

**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 SQ16-000068

**Topic:** MJD Foundation

**Hansard Page:** Written

**Senator Siewert, asked:**

Will the NDIS replace all the support services currently provided by the MJD Foundation to people living with MJD?

- a) Given that the NDIS is based on individuals contracting with service providers to access individualised services, how will the NDIS meet the complex needs of remote people with disability living in regions where service providers are not in place?
- b) Is the Department confident that the NDIS as currently designed will be able to adequately support and service people living with MJD and their families in remote communities?
- c) If so, please explain the basis for that confidence

**Answer:**

The National Disability Insurance Agency (the Agency) strongly encourages the MJD Foundation to become a registered provider under the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). Some of the services currently delivered by MJD Foundation, including advocacy, research and education will not be funded under the NDIS. However, there is an opportunity for MJD Foundation to receive funding from individuals under the NDIS, for the delivery of coordination of supports for individuals.

- a) The Agency is working with state, territory and local governments, as well as staff on the ground to gain an understanding of individual remote markets, including gaps and opportunities for market development. Market stewardship approaches will be carried out by the Agency in response to the varying needs of remote settings. Commissioning of services or solutions to meet the needs of participants may occur where the market is not able to meet the demand, particularly in thin markets. Where there is market failure, a provider of last resort will be commissioned to deliver supports and services, based on a community by community approach.

The roll-out of the NDIS in East Arnhem from 1 January 2017 provides an opportunity to pilot a co-design approach. The Agency is working in partnership with the Northern Territory Government and the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C) on the rollout of the NDIS in remote and very remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities across Australia. This partnership will also support identifying the Agency's community by community approach involving analysing current capabilities and gaps and working closely with each jurisdiction to build on and ensure that mainstream supports are identified.

- b) In August 2010, the MJD Foundation identified 40 people who were gene positive or clinically symptomatic as having MJD. The Agency continues to work closely with the MJD Foundation to ensure these individuals are identified and their needs are understood.

Enhancing access to supports for these individuals will be challenging in these remote locations given the historical disadvantage experienced. The Agency has committed to a careful co-design approach to the consideration of the needs of individuals within the community and will work closely with community leaders to build awareness of service providers, uses of technology and community based employment and business solutions to deliver these services.

- c) The Agency anticipates that supports and services will take on different forms or be provided in different ways in rural and remote areas. Opportunities exist to leverage off the high demand and success of tele-health services, videoconferencing or support workers/therapy assistants working with support and professional supervision provided off site. In some instances, families, carers and informal support networks may play a greater role as there are fewer registered or mainstream supports and fewer people currently accessing disability supports.

Where there are very few or no local providers or only one provider, specific intervention by the Agency may be necessary to ensure the delivery of supports to maximise achievement of outcomes for participants.

The Agency will work with communities, governments and service providers who are committed to building capacity in rural and remote communities. The Agency's Rural and Remote Strategy has identified the need to work closely with all governments, identifying local strengths to build on, and using new and accessible technologies. There will be significant opportunities for innovation which will require the shared commitment from mainstream services from all governments.