

Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE Budget Estimates 2017 - 2018

Outcome 1 - Employment

Department of Employment Question No. EMSQ17-004253

Senator Marshall provided in writing

Question

ParentsNext National Expansion

- Why is the government waiting until 1 July 2018 to make this expansion?
- Have any reviews been conducted into the performance of the ParentsNext program? Can they be provided?
- Please explain who will be a compulsory participant in either of the ParentsNext streams? Why?
- How were the 20 locations where the intensive stream targets Indigenous populations chosen?

Answer

Implementation from 1 July 2018

The national expansion of ParentsNext will commence 1 July 2018 to allow the Department of Employment and Department of Human Services enough lead time to implement the program.

Performance of ParentsNext program

No formal review of ParentsNext has been conducted, however the Department of Employment considered a range of evidence in developing the proposal to expand ParentsNext nationally. This includes data on the performance of ParentsNext from the Department's program monitoring, qualitative feedback from ParentsNext providers and participants, and the results of trials conducted between 2010 and 2016.

Compulsory participation

From 1 July 2018, participation in ParentsNext will be compulsory for parents who have been receiving Parenting Payment for the last six months, have had no earnings during this period, have a child aged under six years, and fall into one of the following groups:

Stream targeted to the most disadvantaged parents	More intensive stream – 30 locations
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Early school leavers aged under 22 without year 12 and have a youngest child at least <u>one year</u> of age.• Are assessed as being highly disadvantaged and have a youngest child at least <u>three years</u> of age.• Are in a <u>jobless family</u> and have a youngest child aged five.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Early school leavers aged under 22 without year 12 and have a youngest child at least <u>six months</u> of age.• Are assessed as being highly disadvantaged and have a youngest child at least <u>six months</u> of age.• Have a youngest child aged five.

Compulsory participation ensures that the above groups of parents, who have been identified as the most in need of assistance, engage in the program.

Selection of the 20 locations for the more intensive stream

The 20 locations selected for the more intensive stream of ParentsNext were chosen because they have a high proportion of Parenting Payment recipients who are Indigenous. Providing greater assistance to Indigenous parents to prepare for work aims to contribute to closing the gap in Indigenous employment.