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Senator Karen Grogan

Via email: senator.Grogan@aph.gov.au

Dear Senator Grogan

In response to questions during the Budget Estimates hearings on 1 April 2022, I provide the following information regarding the Partners in the Community (PITC) Program request for tender (AusTender reference SPC00001863) along with the PITC currently delivering Early Childhood (EC) and Local Area Coordination (LAC) services for the NDIA.

Time allocated – request for tender

In the PITC Program request for tender, the NDIA has provided mean work effort assumptions for the first time. The assumptions are provided as an indicative guide for the Tenderer of the expected time the NDIA estimates would be required for each Fee Category.

The assumptions should be considered together with the Statement of Requirements in the request for tender, which sets out the functions to be delivered by the Partner. This includes guidance about how an individual may receive support from the Partner across several functions or Fee Categories.

There are other functions in the request for tender (aside from 'Plan Budget Development') that cover the key part of the Partner role in working with the child and family (for example, 'Early Connections' is 10.1 hours covering initial assessment of the needs of the child).

Time allocated - current program

Time allocated for specific functions is not included in the current Partner grant agreements and was not provided as information for applicants as part of the previous grant rounds for the PITC Program.

However, the NDIA recently validated assumptions for current Partner 'planning' activities via a time in motion study conducted from December 2020 to February 2021, providing a point of comparison to the request for tender.

Time allocated - comparison

The time in motion study completed with current Partners found that:

- For full **plan reviews** for Participants aged 0-6 years (EC), the total time to complete a plan review was 4.7 hours (n=21)
- For full **plan reviews** for Participants aged 7+ years (LAC), the total time to complete a plan review was 4.4 hours (n=102)

The key activities included in the hours for 'plan reviews' in the time in motion study as described above are:

- Pre-Planning
- Planning (including Plan Budget Development)

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In the Fee Schedule for the request for tender, the relevant comparative activities and hours are:

- Plan Changes / Reviews
 - EC - 4.5 hours
 - LAC - 3.9 hours
- Plan Budget Development
 - EC - 2.4 hours
 - LAC - 2.4 hours

The comparison for 'planning activities' between the time in motion study with current Partners, and the request for tender assumptions is summarised in the table below.

Table 1 - Comparison of PITC time in motion study with PITC request for tender

	PITC time in motion study 'Planning activity' (total hours)	PITC RFT Fee Schedule 'Planning activity' (total hours)
Early Childhood	4.7	6.9
Local Area Coordination	4.4	6.3

Future PITC program

The Agency is working towards a future PITC Program that allows Partners to dedicate more time to the delivery of pre-access support, early supports for children, plan implementation support for individuals and their families and carers, and activities to facilitate greater community inclusion.

Under an improved PITC Program, Partners will play an even greater role in linking people to community and mainstream services, helping expand the community's capacity to create a more inclusive society and deliver improved outcomes for all people with disability.

The items within the request for tender reflect this shift in focus, with additional effort allocated for Partners to connect people to community and mainstream services ('Early Connections' for EC Partners, and 'Community Connections and Supports' for LAC Partners), and additional effort for check-ins to support NDIS Participants with a plan.

A copy of this letter has been provided to the Community Affairs Legislation Committee Chair.

Yours sincerely



Martin Hoffman
Chief Executive Officer
National Disability Insurance Agency

5 April 2022