

# Joint Committee on Human Rights inquiry into compulsory income management

Public Hearing – 5 July 2024

## ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Department of Social Services

**Topic:** Joint Committee on Human Rights inquiry into compulsory income management

**Question reference number:** IQ24-000043

**Question asked by:** Josh Burns

**Type of Question:** Written      **Hansard Page/s:** N/A

**Date set by the Committee for the return of answer:** 10 July 2024

### Question:

3. How does the department assess whether, and to what extent, compulsory income management is effective to achieve its stated aims?

### Answer:

The Department of Social Services (the department) uses performance measures to monitor the performance of IM Programs, and reviews and evaluations to assess the effectiveness of the overall approaches. The department has had performance measures in place for the Cashless Debit Card (CDC) and for enhanced Income Management (IM). These are regularly reviewed for relevance on an annual basis and amended as necessary.

#### Enhanced IM (2023-2024)

- **Objective:** from 4 September 2023, IM participants were able to request to transition to enhanced IM and the SmartCard.
  - **Measure:** participants transitioned to enhanced IM have accessed their account.
  - **Target:** at least 95 per cent of enhanced IM participants have accessed their account.

#### CDC (program ended)

- **Objective:** the Program aimed to strengthen relationships, support families, improve wellbeing of children and young people, reduce the cost of family breakdown, and strengthen family and community functioning.
  - **Measure:** extent to which the CDC supports a reduction in social harm in communities.
  - **Target:** the CDC program data demonstrates improvement in social outcomes through analysis of card spending and use.
  - **Measure:** participants are using their CDC to direct income support payments to essential goods and services, including to support the wellbeing of the participant.
  - **Target:** 95 per cent of CDC participants have activated their card and are using their card to purchase non-restricted items.

#### IM Evaluations

There have been a number of evaluations undertaken by the Government on the IM Programs. A comprehensive list of the evaluations are available on the department's website at [www.dss.gov.au/families-and-children-programmes-services-welfare-conditionality-income-management/income-management-evaluations](http://www.dss.gov.au/families-and-children-programmes-services-welfare-conditionality-income-management/income-management-evaluations).