

To the Senate

RE: THE ADMINISTRATION AND PURCHASING OF DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT SERVICES IN AUSTRALIA – SUBMISSION

I am writing as a Training & Placement Consultant for Break Thru People Solutions in the DES department and I will be writing from the perspective of my Clients and their genuine concerns regarding the thought of constant, periodic re-tendering and the instability it causes.

I currently have a caseload of up to 25 Clients with permanent mental, emotional and physical disabilities. For majority of my Clients, the journey they face prior to their initial appointment in the DES service is quite difficult. Once they commence in the DES service, it then takes time to build trust & rapport to bring the Client to the point of being 'job ready'. My concern for my entire caseload is I can never promise a long-term connection between my Client and myself as a representative of Break Thru. This then produces a short-term view towards on-going support for my Clients which makes me fear for their wellbeing in the event that my site closes and my Clients have to find another DES provider and have to endure the entire 'settling in' process again.

I understand completely that under-performing sites need evaluating and there definitely is a need for that but for sites that are performing from a 3 star level which I am currently a part of, in my eyes is doing a great job. The number of success stories that can be produced just from my caseload alone is too much to write in one submission let alone compiling stories for the entire site. It will be a sad day for my Clients if they lose yet another constant in their lives because on paper, we fall short from the perceived benchmark.

I would bet my entire under-paid salary that the people creating such benchmarks have no idea what is actually involved in taking a Client from a place of disempowerment to feeling confident that they are not only employable but can do the job as good if not better than someone else without the diagnosed barriers that they carry.

My suggestion is get rid of the sites that are two stars and less because at that level, one needs to question why they are performing at that level but for sites that are performing 3 stars and more should not have to re-tender because in my opinion, my site is doing a bloody good job and the milestones that we have reached to get to 3 stars should not be undermined.

I would like to invite the members of parliament to come visit my site (Break Thru People Solutions DES Wyong), talk to the TPC's and their Clients and judge for yourself if we're an underperforming site or not.

Kind regards,

John Veloso

Training & Placement Consultant