

CPSA



**COMBINED PENSIONERS
& SUPERANNUANTS
ASSOCIATION OF NSW INC**

Submission to the Senate Community Affairs Legislation
Committee's *Inquiry into the Social Services Legislation
Amendment (Transition Mobility Allowance to the National
Disability Insurance Scheme) Bill 2016*

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Combined Pensioners & Superannuants Association of NSW Inc (CPSA)

Address: Level 9, 28 Foveaux Street, Surry Hills NSW 2010 **ABN:** 11 244 559 772

Phone: (02) 9281 3588 **Country Callers:** 1800 451 488 **Facsimile:** (02) 9281 9716

Email: cpsa@cpsa.org.au **Website:** www.cpsa.org.au **Donations:** 1800 451 488

CPSA is a non-profit, non-party-political membership association founded in 1931 which serves pensioners of all ages, superannuants and low-income retirees. CPSA has 108 branches and affiliated organisations with a combined membership of 22,000 people living throughout NSW. CPSA's aim is to improve the standard of living and well-being of its constituents.

CPSA welcomes the opportunity to comment on the Social Services Legislation Amendment (Transition Mobility Allowance to the National Disability Insurance Scheme) Bill 2016.

This Bill provides for the cessation of the Mobility Allowance from 1 July 2020, when its transition to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) will be complete.

People in receipt of the Disability Support Pension (DSP) who turn 65 can change over to the Age Pension. If prior to their 65th birthday they were receiving assistance under the NDIS and were receiving the Mobility Allowance, they will continue to do so until 30 June 2020, when the Mobility Allowance will cease altogether. They will then be covered under the NDIS for their mobility needs through individualised supports.

The Bill blocks access to the Mobility Allowance for people over 65 not currently on a social security payment who go onto a payment. This is because people over 65 are not eligible for assistance under the NDIS, unless they were receiving assistance under the NDIS before they turned 65. If at some point a person over 65 needs assistance currently provided by the Mobility Allowance, this person will be covered under “continuity of support arrangements”.

CPSA is concerned about the “continuity of support arrangements” generally, because currently nothing beyond that term is known about them. What we do know is that a person who incurs a non-age related disability after their 65th birthday, will not be eligible for assistance under the NDIS, but will receive assistance under “continuity of support arrangements”.

As CPSA’s main concern is with the unknown design of “continuity of support arrangements” for people over 65 not covered by the NDIS, CPSA recommends that the Mobility Allowance should not cease before it is known how “continuity of support arrangements” will work for people over 65 currently in receipt of the Mobility Allowance.

It would seem that this aspect of “continuity of support arrangements” is straightforward in its resolution, given that the Mobility Allowance is a money transfer and that it would stand to reason that a “continuity of support arrangement” to achieve the continued level of support would be a Mobility Allowance under a different name, unless the unstated intention is that Mobility Allowance type of assistance will no longer be available from 1 July 2020.

In summary, the Bill proposes to cut an allowance of \$93.20 a fortnight to a very limited number of people who are asked through a Centrelink form letter to move off the DSP and onto the Age Pension. The savings would be infinitesimal, but the loss of the Mobility Allowance would to the very few people over 65 who get it, would be devastating.