

Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights

Public Hearing – 29 July 2024

ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Department of Social Services

Topic: Inquiry into Compulsory Income Management

Question reference number: IQ24-000143

Question asked by: Kylea Tink

Type of Question: Spoken. **Hansard Page/s:** 16

Date set by the Committee for the return of answer: 05 August 2024

Question:

Ms TINK: ... In the report from Adelaide Uni, it says that the majority of CDC participants believed that the ending of the program was a positive step versus a minority of stakeholders. I did note, though, that you said 'minority of stakeholders'. When the university was defining the minority of stakeholders, they went as far to identify for the reader that it's actually those services based in Bundaberg and Hervey Bay. I'm hoping you can answer this for me. Would those communities be covered by the Family Responsibilities Commission in Queensland?

Mr Burford: No, not Bundaberg and Hervey Bay.

Ms TINK: Do you know whether it was looked at at all in terms of why there seemed to have been a more favourable result when it came to those Queensland communities from a stakeholder perspective than in the other communities that research had been gathered?

Mr Burford: Not precisely. It is a larger population base at Bundaberg and Hervey Bay. I would think that there is a greater level of mainstream supports in that place. But that's really a guesstimate rather than a proper examination of that.

Ms TINK: Is there any way that I could request that somebody just seeks some information? I am keen to understand whether a big part of this is about the wraparound services that exist within the context of any income management program. It seemed quite notable that it was the Queensland community stakeholders that seemed to believe that it had been a better outcome to have removed people from CDC than those in other states.

Mr Burford: Yes, we can have a look at that.

Answer:

The Department of Social Services (the Department) does not hold the details of individuals' responses represented in the University of Adelaide '*Review of the Impact of the Cessation of the Cashless Debit Card: Final Report*' (the Review). The Department notes that the following references to the aggregated views of Bundaberg-Hervey Bay respondents may be relevant:

- That the transition from the Cashless Debit Card (CDC) program had facilitated positive impacts for past participants in relation to financial management (p.47)
- That there were no observed impacts on alcohol misuse in this study site over the Review period (pp.53-54)
- There was little change in the incidence of gambling in this study site over the Review period (p.56)
- There was little change in community safety outcomes in this study site over the Review period (p.69).

Since the abolishment of the CDC program in March 2023, the Department continues to engage with former CDC communities. The Department is working directly with communities to support initiatives in community-led priorities including youth services, financial and digital literacy and guidance, job readiness and employment capability, and cultural connection to services.