

Senate Community Affairs Committee
ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
SOCIAL SERVICES PORTFOLIO
2013-14 Additional Estimates Hearings

Outcome Number: 5

Question No: 503

Topic: National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Moore asked:

Will the NDIA provide details about any workshops they have conducted with a particular focus, e.g. people from the same region, people with similar backgrounds? How do you determine who goes to what workshop, having regard to the sensitivities of people in a mixed group? And any other information available about that process?

Answer:

The National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) organises workshops for targeted stakeholder interests both as part of the design and development of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and on an ongoing operational basis. Workshops have varied in purpose, participant base and location depending on the goal of specific activities. No single approach is utilised to organising workshops, which have been and are tailored to the topic of discussion and matters to be ‘workshopped’ by participants.

Workshops vary in size, topic and purpose. Each workshop is planned with specific population groups, stakeholder interest and / or location in mind. Workshops are sometimes organised with a partner organisation, often a respected Non-Government Organisation (NGO) in an NDIS trial site. Most workshops have been focused on local / trial site populations.

The NDIA has conducted more than 80 events described as workshops (out of a total list of individual engagement activities in excess of 1,300). It is not always easy, however, to be precise about whether a consultative, task or issue focused event with individuals or representatives of organisations is a workshop or some other type of engagement activity.

For example, before the 1 July 2013 launch of the NDIS, the NDIA conducted a series of locally-based, small group (6 to 10 individuals) co-design discussions lasting two hours and involving (separately) potential participants and carers and disability support providers to identify preferred arrangements accessing the NDIS after 1 July.

By contrast, in November 2013 the NDIA organised a Seminar involving 40 of Australia’s leading disability research academics who spent a full day together ‘workshopping’ issues around a national disability research agenda to which the NDIA might contribute. Both of the meeting types identified above have a task-oriented approach to involving external stakeholders with relevance to the topic.

The sample of workshops reported below gives an indication of the range of topics, participants and purposes for which a small-group, workshop structure has been utilised by the NDIA:

- Co-design workshops for potential participants, family members, carers or providers held in each NDIS trial site prior to NDIS launch. Workshops would have about ten participants often identified by local Carers' organisations, peer support groups and / or provider networks. Typically such workshops would involve people from the same stakeholder interest to facilitate a clear focus for discussion, as free as possible from any risk of potential conflict of interest (i.e. people with disability would be consulted separately from disability support providers). Three typical examples are;
 - South Australia on 18 October in Adelaide - with parents whose children will most likely be eligible for the first stage of the NDIS.
 - Tasmania on 22 and 23 October in Launceston and Hobart – with young people aged 15-24, primarily with intellectual disability.
 - Victoria on 31 October in Geelong – with adults who had a range of disabilities including vision impairment and mental illness.
- In January 2013 the NDIA organised a workshop focussing on privacy rights within the NDIS planning process as part of preparing the mandatory Privacy Impact Assessment. The workshop involved Canberra based people with disability and carers identified through local NGO networks.
- In October 2013, the NDIA Tasmania trial site office organised a workshop on delivering local NDIS operations in remoter areas of West Tasmania involving representatives of Tasmanian peak bodies and disability advocacy organisations.
- In October 2013, the NDIA South Australia trial site office conducted a planning workshop with the Ngaanyatjarra, Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara Women's Council (NPY Women's Council) to discuss and co-ordinate preparations for delivering NDIS supports to families living in extremely remote areas of central Australia.