

Senate Community Affairs Committee
ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
SOCIAL SERVICES PORTFOLIO
2017-2018 Budget Estimates Hearings

Outcome: National Disability Insurance Agency

Question No: NDIA SQ17-000107

Topic: Overruling decisions

Hansard Page: Spoken

Senator Siewert asked:

Senator SIEWERT: Let me be fairly specific—I understand what you have just said and take that point on board—how many times do you override a decision where a local office has said yes and the virtual team or the national office overrides that.

Mr Bowen: The only other circumstance in which that would occur would be: if our internal assurance checks came to the view that that original decision was incorrect, then we would correct it.

Senator SIEWERT: How many times has that happened?

Mr Bowen: We will found that out.

Senator SIEWERT: Could you find that out for me.

Mr Bowen: Yes, but that is a natural and appropriate part of quality assurance testing.

Senator SIEWERT: That may be your version of it. A participant's version is: you have disallowed something that was originally approved, and it is a point of contention

Mr Bowen: The issue is that, in running a national organisation, it is critically important that we have consistency of decision and application of the legislation, and that is what the assurance checks do. If necessary, they will correct it. Just because the first decision was made does not mean every decision is right. That is why we have assurance systems.

Senator SIEWERT: I accept that, but the issue of concern is where somebody has been given a support and then the national office or the virtual team overrides that.

Mr Bowen: Yes. That becomes an issue around communicating that decision to the participant, but that is a normal part of an assurance program.

Senator SIEWERT: In the particular instance, which I will ask on notice, it was deemed not necessary for an ordinary life.

Mr Bowen: We will need to see the example.

Senator SIEWERT: We will send it to you.

Answer:

The National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) has a quality assurance program which checks the correctness of decisions made. This is primarily from the point of legislative and procedural compliance and correctness.

In addition, the NDIA has a national Technical Advice Team which provides specialist technical advice to NDIA planners and Local Area Coordination partners regarding reasonable and necessary supports.

Once a delegate decision is made to approve a plan, adjustments to the plan can only be made via a plan review process.

The NDIA is unable to quantify the exact number on how many plans have had a change in funded supports in the circumstances outlined at hearing. The NDIA welcomes further information on these circumstances.