

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 SQ17-000117

Topic: Planners

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Kakoschke-Moore, asked:

Are the planners experts in the conditions they work with?
If not why not?

Answer:

The National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) endeavours to have the most appropriately skilled and experienced staff working with or available to advise on issues relevant to each participant.

All NDIA planner positions meet essential skills and personal attributes criteria relevant to the planner classification level. It is desirable that applicants have an understanding of or lived experience in disability. Around 15 per cent of all NDIA staff identify as having a disability, and around 50 per cent identify as having a lived experience of disability.

Relevant qualifications in human services, allied health, or disability is desirable as is experience working in the human services sector for example, disability, child services, allied health, social work, mental health, community development or education.

The NDIA is also implementing a strategy that identifies the skills and experience of individual staff to ensure that planners with relevant experience and knowledge are allocated to the participant where required.

It is important to note the NDIA recognises no two situations are the same and so a planner is not able to be an expert in every individual circumstance. Those preparing NDIS plans have access to a wide range of resources including task cards, reference guides and training material – including products tailored to different disability types.

The NDIA has also established an advisory team which assists planners and Local Area Coordinators (LAC) with the application of the *National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013*, guidelines and reasonable and necessary decision making. The technical advisory team includes staff with qualifications in allied health and other appropriate disciplines. They are available to provide technical guidance and support to all staff on a range of disabilities and contexts. A planner and LAC partner staff can make contact with the team at any time for assistance with complex decisions during the planning process.