

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 SQ17-000145

Topic: Autism

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Brown, asked:

What is the NDIA's view on the value of the Autism Advisers service within an NDIS environment?

Answer:

The role of the Autism Advisor will change as the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) becomes available in an area. In areas where the NDIS has not yet rolled out, the Autism Advisor will continue with their current role. In areas where the NDIS is now available, the Autism Advisors will no longer accept referrals for the Helping Children with Autism (HCWA) early intervention funding program.

During the NDIS transition period, Autism Advisors will continue their work to support families with enquiries, with information and resources and with community and mainstream linkages through to June 2019 - with the exception of South Australia (SA) and the Australian Capital Territory (ACT). In SA and the ACT, the NDIS has rolled out for children in the zero to seven aged cohort and the HCWA program funding has fully transitioned to the NDIS.

Under the NDIS the individualised components of programs such as HCWA will no longer be available as they will be replaced with individualised supports for children in an NDIS plan.

Children needing support under the NDIS will be linked to an NDIS Early Childhood Early Intervention (ECEI) partner. The partner role receives advice from a range of leading Australian early childhood intervention practitioners and researchers to design an ECEI Approach. The ECEI Approach recognises that timely access to evidenced best-practice early childhood intervention is vital for children and it will help identify the type and level of early intervention support each child needs to achieve their best possible outcomes throughout their life course.

The NDIA's ECEI Approach is delivered by a range of specialist Early Childhood Partners who have expertise and experience in working with children with developmental delays and disabilities.