

Senate Community Affairs Committee
ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
SOCIAL SERVICES PORTFOLIO
2016 – 2017 Supplementary Budget Estimates Hearings

Outcome: National Disability Insurance Agency

Question No: NDIA SQ16-000043

Topic: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and the NDIS

Hansard Page: Spoken

Senator Siewert, asked:

What specific planning has been done to include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and communities so they can access NDIS in a culturally safe way?

a) Will any of these funds be affected by the cashless welfare card roll-out in the trial site areas?

Answer:

The National Disability Insurance Agency (the Agency) continues to undertake consultation with representatives of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People to ensure that the scheme is implemented in a manner that is culturally appropriate.

This consultation has informed the Agency Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Strategy (the Strategy) which focuses on building relationships on a community-by-community basis. The Strategy is due for release in December 2016 and is being used to build the working arrangements for implementation of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) required under the bilateral agreements.

The Agency has developed and released its first Reconciliation Action Plan 2016-2017 which articulates the Agency's commitment to providing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities with culturally appropriate and equitable access to both the NDIS and employment opportunities within the Agency.

In line with the Agency's community-by-community approach, the Agency has undertaken work in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to build NDIS awareness and readiness with a focus on nationally consistent communications with people from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds. Concurrently, the Agency is developing community-specific products to deliver NDIS information to local communities in line with NDIS phasing schedules.

In regional, remote and urban locations, the Agency and our Partners in the Community are developing local engagement strategies with key community leaders, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, community members and service delivery organisations.

The Agency has recently commenced the East Arnhem Co-Design Project which will enable the Agency and other Commonwealth agencies to gauge the opportunity to optimise economic and employment outcomes for local communities from the integration of the NDIS.

a) Access to the NDIS and funded supports for NDIS are not means tested and has no impact on income support, including participants in the Cashless Debit Card Trial.