

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 SQ16-000050

Topic: Providers

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Siewert, asked:

Is the NDIA aware that small business providers in Victoria are required to pay for audits to be registered?

- a) Why are small business providers in Victoria required to pay for such audits when those in other states apparently aren't required?
- b) Has the NDIA looked into this matter?
- c) Has the NDIA received complaints about this matter?
- d) Is the NDIA aware if this issue has affected the number of providers registered with the NDIA in Victoria?
- e) Does the NDIA consider this is unfair to smaller provider businesses?
- f) Why doesn't the NDIA take a standard approach to registration across the country?

Answer:

The Department of Social Services is leading the development of a National Quality and Safeguards framework. The Ministerial Disability Reform Council met on 2 September 2016 to consider the framework and the framework is expected to proceed to COAG for endorsement later this year.

In transition, states and territories maintain responsibility for Quality and Safeguards as outlined in the bilateral agreements. All providers of National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) supports are required to comply with existing state and territory standards and legislation in each jurisdiction. All providers need to manage their own compliance and ensure they meet or exceed the relevant requirements specified to each state and territory jurisdiction.

To operationalise these agreements, the National Disability Insurance Agency (the Agency) has worked with each state and territory and the Commonwealth to develop transition Quality and Safeguards Working Arrangements which detail the roles and responsibilities of parties in relation to Quality and Safeguards. Quality and Safeguards requirements for providers are determined by jurisdictions as part of these Working Arrangements, which specify the requirements of each state and territory in relation to all NDIS registered service providers and the services they wish to deliver. For some types of services, this includes compliance with specific accreditations and/or audits.

All organisations intending to deliver supports in Victoria are required to achieve and maintain status as a 'Victorian approved NDIS provider'. To gain status as a Victorian approved NDIS provider, organisations must demonstrate compliance with Victoria's Quality and Safeguards requirements, including independent auditing where applicable.

The Agency receives correspondence about jurisdictional auditing requirements and continuously works with states and territories to review and streamline quality and safeguards requirements in line with their legislation. It will update the transition working arrangements where the Victorian Government determines this is required.

Notwithstanding these requirements, which are risk based and take account of the context in which support is provided, demand for registration is consistently high, including registration for services with requirements for independent auditing.