

**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 SQ16-000051

**Topic:** Housing

**Hansard Page:** Written

**Senator Siewert,** asked:

The NDIA's decision paper on housing funding ('SDA funding') stated that the funding for housing would begin on 1 July 2016.

- a) How many participants currently have SDA payments in their plans?
- b) How many new housing properties for people with disability have been created by the NDIS since it began on 1 July 2013?
- c) The Productivity Commission's report included enough funding for housing payments to provide for all young people in residential aged care. Can the government confirm that all young people in aged care will get an SDA housing payment to enable them to leave aged care?
- d) What are the Government's plans to make sure that NDIS participants living in regional and remote areas will get access to housing, given that housing providers may find the SDA policy too risky to build any new accommodation?
- e) Will all NDIA participants get choice and control over their SDA housing payments?
- f) Will NDIS participants who live in state government run or funded group homes have the choice of changing providers if they wish to?
- g) Can the Government guarantee that any deals done with State Governments to make housing "in-kind" will still give participants full choice to change their housing and support provider?

**Answers:**

- a) There were 1,770 participants with Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA) supports listed in their approved plans at 30 September 2016.
- b) The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) provides SDA funding through a participant's plan to an SDA provider. SDA pricing was designed to increase supply and was introduced on 1 July 2016. Activation of new SDA developments has only just commenced. The National Disability Insurance Agency (the Agency) will get more visibility of demand and supply as more plans are completed and dwellings enrolled. An increase in the development of new SDA will be further supported by the finalisation of new SDA Rules currently being prepared between Ministers. Participant goals to achieve more independent or different housing options are not limited to participants with SDA in their plans. The Agency is aware of some new housing being developed for people with disability during the Scheme trial, including in remote areas.
- c) Participants of the NDIS who identify a goal to change their current accommodation situation will have a Housing Options Package included in their NDIS plan. The Agency will ensure that all young people residing in residential aged care who meet the NDIS access requirements and who express a goal of exploring an alternative housing option, will have this package included.

Therefore consideration of the reasonable and necessary need for SDA will occur. This package will also consider how home modifications, assistive technology and/or other supports can contribute to increased housing options (such as returning home).

- d) The SDA pricing allows for adjustments for location and strong variations in capital costs, and where this is not sufficient the Agency will consider the need to stimulate supply including in regional and remote areas. The market response will be monitored through a reporting and monitoring framework. The Agency will consider interventions as/if required and this may include direct commissioning. The Agency has already seen stimulation of housing supply for non-SDA participants in the Barkly region of the Northern Territory during trial.
- e) SDA funding in a participant's plan will be based on a reasonable and necessary decision about the required building type, design category and location. All dwellings need to be enrolled with the Agency as SDA. The choice is limited to enrolled SDA dwellings. Currently demand is greater than supply. A participant may source a SDA dwelling that matches the funding amount in their plan. Given the specialist nature of the SDA stock, choice may never be unconstrained.
- f) The separation of the agreements for the provision of SDA and Supported Independent Living supports provides choice and control for participants residing in SDA. People sharing homes will have individual rights, but they should expect to establish household decision making processes so that joint decisions can be made. Existing contracts will take time to unwind. Subject to in-kind arrangements, all participants will have the same opportunities and rights.
- g) Agreements on in-kind are between the Commonwealth and State/Territory Governments. The Agency is not a party to these decisions. The Agency's administrative processes have been designed to support the in-kind agreement. If a participant receiving supports under the in-kind arrangements chooses to change providers, this may limit their choices initially to other in-kind supports but as in-kind arrangements are expected to only be in place during transition, these choices will expand over time.