

**Senate Committee: Education and Employment**

**QUESTION ON NOTICE  
Supplementary Budget Estimates 2015 - 2016**

**Outcome: Early Childhood and Child Care**

**Department of Education and Training Question No. SQ15-000913**

Senator Lines, Sue provided in writing

***Inclusion Support Program***

**Question**

In relation to the Inclusion Support Program:

- a) What support for children with disability will be provided under this program?
  - i. How many children with disability will be supported?
  - ii. How many children with disability are currently supported for inclusion support?
  - iii. How will eligibility under the new program be assessed?
  - iv. How will needs of each child and centre be assessed?
- b) How much money is allocated for each of the four components of the Inclusion Support Program?
  - i. inclusion consultants,
  - ii. specialist equipment library,
  - iii. inclusion development fund, and
  - iv. the inclusion development fund manager?
- c) How many inclusion consultants will be funded under the new program? How many per state and territory?
- d) How will the specialist equipment library operate? How will eligibility for this be determined? Give an example of the way this service would operate?

**Answer**

Under the Inclusion Support Programme:

- a) Inclusion Consultants will work with eligible early childhood education and care services to identify inclusion needs, develop goals and implement strategies to build their capacity and capability to include children with additional needs including children with disability or those undergoing assessment for disability. This will include managing a specialist equipment library. The Inclusion Development Fund will offer funding support where a barrier exists that prevents the inclusion of a child with additional needs that cannot be addressed through support from the Inclusion Consultant.
  - i. The Inclusion Support Programme is a supply-side programme where support is provided to eligible early childhood education and care services (rather than to families) to improve their capacity and capability to include children with additional needs. The programme is expected to support more than 11,000 services in 2016–17.
  - ii. Under the Inclusion and Professional Support Program, in 2014–15, 5321 services were supported through the Inclusion Support Subsidy. This includes children with assessed/diagnosed disability, children who are undergoing continuous assessment of disability and children from a refugee or humanitarian background who have ongoing high support needs.

- iii. Information on how eligibility will be assessed will be outlined in the Inclusion Support Programme Guidelines which are still being developed.
  - iv. Information on the assessment of a service's inclusion needs will be outlined in the Programme Guidelines which are still being developed.
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- b) The Australian Government committed \$409 million over four years to the Inclusion Support Programme. Funding allocations will be determined following a Request for Tender (RFT) process to select Inclusion Consultants and the Inclusion Development Fund Manager.
  - c) The number of Inclusion Consultants funded in each state and territory will be outlined in the Programme Guidelines which are still being developed.
  - d) Inclusion Consultants will manage a Specialist Equipment Library to lend specialist equipment to eligible early childhood education and care services to support the inclusion of a child or children with disability with ongoing high support needs. Details on eligibility and assessment processes will be outlined in the Programme Guidelines which are still being developed.