

Senate Community Affairs Committee
ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
FAMILIES, HOUSING, COMMUNITY SERVICES AND
INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS PORTFOLIO
2011-12 Budget Estimates Hearings

Outcome Number: 5

Question No: 417

Topic: Productivity Commission Report/National Disability Strategy

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Boyce asked:

The Productivity Commission delivered a draft report on a long-term care and support scheme for people with disability in Australia on 28 February 2011.

- Is everything on track for the final report to be delivered to government in July 2011?
- What is the process and timeline for implementation of the National Disability Strategy?
- What portion of the National Disability Strategy will be directed to areas of high unmet need – ie Indigenous Australians and regional areas?

Answer:

The first part of this question in relation to the Productivity Commission inquiry has been referred to The Treasury.

The National Disability Strategy outlines a 10-year national policy framework to guide government activity across six key outcome areas and to drive future reforms in mainstream and specialist disability service system to improve outcomes for people with disability, their families and carers. The Strategy was endorsed by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) in February 2011 and launched by the Australian Government in March 2011. All governments are promoting the Strategy in their jurisdictions.

In the first year of the Strategy, the focus is on building the foundation for implementation which will involve engaging mainstream areas, such as housing, education and health, to ensure they give effect to the Strategy's objectives in their area of responsibility.

The Australian, state, territory and local governments are prioritising areas for future action in consultation with key stakeholders. The Commonwealth is liaising with the National People with Disabilities and Carer Council and the Australian Human Rights Commission on the implementation of the Strategy.

The governance arrangements include a report by the Standing Council on Community, Housing and Disability Services to COAG after the first 12 months (February 2012) and then every two years. The first year report will set out the implementation plan, including timelines that take into account the areas of greatest need within each jurisdiction and an evaluation plan. The Commonwealth is meeting with the states and territories regularly to progress the implementation.

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For the first time, all levels of government have agreed to a Strategy that aims to improve outcomes for people with disability. The Strategy takes an approach that is comprehensive while recognising the different needs, perspectives and interests of people with disability.

Recognition of the diversity of experiences of people with disability including Indigenous Australians, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and people living in regional areas underpins the six outcome areas of the Strategy.

The National Indigenous Reform Agreement (NIRA) reflects a partnership between the Commonwealth and state and territory governments to work with Indigenous Australians to achieve the six Closing the Gap in Indigenous disadvantage targets.

An area for future action within the Strategy states: "*At the review points of the NIRA and related National Partnership agreements, parties agree to consider including strategies consistent with the Strategy, to ensure they address the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians with disability.*"