



EAP18/7477

Mr Bruce Notley-Smith MP
Chair
Legislative Assembly Public Accounts Committee
Parliament of New South Wales
Macquarie Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

- 4 SEP 2018

Dear Mr Notley-Smith

Public Accounts Committee – Building the readiness of the non-government sector for the NDIS

I refer to your recent correspondence requesting further information from the NSW Department of Family and Community Services to the Auditor-General's report, *Building the readiness of the non-government sector for the NDIS*.

I enclose our response to the additional questions.

If you would like more information, please contact [REDACTED]

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Coutts-Trotter', written in a cursive style.

Michael Coutts-Trotter
Secretary

IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS – REQUEST FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Department of Family and Community Services (FACS)

Building the readiness of the non-government sector for the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)

Recommendation 1

1. The response details a range of strategies and initiatives taken to address the recommendation:

a) What steps are being taken to assess the success of the range of initiatives to build capacity in the non-government sector set out in the response?

- Provider Transition Activity Assessment (PTAA) was conducted by FACS to assess how funded disability service providers were preparing for NDIS transition, and to guide further work with providers during the transition to the NDIS.
- Phase 1 was conducted during 2016 based on data from 30 June 2015. Overall, the assessment showed providers were progressing well towards NDIS readiness, with 72% of providers rated as 'proactive' or 'maturing'.
- FACS completed a second round of desktop assessments, Phase 2, in the first half of 2017, based on data from 30 June 2016. Overall, the assessment showed that provider level of maturity increased from 72% to 88% (16% increase) rating as 'proactive' or 'maturing'.
- When comparing results between small organisations (ie those with less than \$1 million funding from Ageing, Disability and Home Care (ADHC)) and large organisations, smaller organisations overall had a slightly higher level of maturity. This was similar to Phase 1 results. Smaller organisations were also more ready according to quantitative measures, such as the availability of cash to cover expenditure (relative to their size).
- Larger organisations were more ready, according to qualitative measures, in areas such as strategic planning, marketing, risk management, and governance and service delivery.
- Many providers have updated their websites to include information about the NDIS, with some offering personalised assistance with planning for the transition. There has also been more evidence of strategic plans in preparation for the transition to the NDIS.
- The final report for the last Industry Development Fund (IDF) projects is due 31 October 2018 and a final audit due by the end of the year. These reports will provide more information about the IDF.

b) What is the Department doing specifically to monitor gaps in the NDIS rollout, particularly in regional and remote areas?

- The National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) has the lead role and responsibility as the market steward and, where appropriate, will respond to and intervene in the market.
- The NDIA has developed a Rural and Remote Strategy to ensure the NDIS is responsive to, and appropriate for, people with disability, their families and carers living in rural and remote areas. A copy of the strategy is available on the NDIA website. The Strategy includes activity areas and measures of progress and success. Indicators will be collected through the NDIA Outcomes Framework. The Strategy includes lessons learned from the various State and Territory NDIS trial sites, including NSW (also relevant for Recommendation 4, lessons learned).
- A Market Oversight Working Group (MOWG) was established in January 2018 with representation from each State and Territory and the Commonwealth to provide broad oversight of the NDIS market, monitoring of systemic market risks and gaps, and prudential oversight of providers that would be hard to replace in the event of their sudden and unexpected exit from the market.
- The key objective of the MOWG is to provide a platform for cross jurisdictional collaboration to support the development and implementation of a robust and responsive NDIS market, including in regional and remote areas.
- MOWG activities include:
 - reviewing the current NDIS market-monitoring framework and making recommendations to ongoing monitoring;
 - developing quarterly NDIS Market Dashboard reporting;
 - providing input and guidance to support market and workforce development;
 - monitoring the implementation of the recommendations of the NDIA's Independent Pricing Review, and
 - monitoring and considering the outcomes of the Joint Standing Committee Inquiry into NDIS Market Readiness.
- The NSW Government is represented on the MOWG by the Department of Premier and Cabinet.

Recommendation 2

1. The response discusses the Department's ongoing work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) and culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities to build capacity and transition to the NDIS:

a) Can you detail how many new providers the Department has supported who are capable of entering the disability market to provide services to ATSI and CALD communities?

- The Building Capacity of Aboriginal People initiative has focused on providing Aboriginal community organisations assistance to achieve Third Party Verification (TVP) against the NSW Disability Service Standards (DSS). Five

Aboriginal organisations engaged with the project, to varying degrees, and had different needs or requirements.

- Of these five, two organisations, (Orange Aboriginal Medical Service, and Yawarra Aboriginal Corporation – Condobolin) achieved TPV and completed transition to the NDIS; and one organisation, Orange Aboriginal Lands Council, had applied for NDIA registration. Each of these organisations reported a high level of satisfaction with the initiative.
- Through the Aboriginal Disability Provider Grant program, the number of grant recipients who registered for the NDIS increased by over 30% (or 6 organisations).
- FACS has also worked in partnership with the NDIA to roll-out Information, Linkages and Capacity Building (ILC) funding to prepare NSW for the NDIS.
- Settlement Services International (SSI) has been funded to deliver the Future Ability program in NSW, in order to engage CALD communities, service providers and individuals with a disability, as well as their families and carers, to enhance their understanding of the NDIS, build the capacity of CALD organisations to promote access to the NDIS, and provide real choice and control to people with disability from CALD backgrounds.
- Findings from the latest progress report, which has been forwarded to the NDIA, are:
 - Five regional round table discussions have taken place in regions with a high CALD population, attended by almost 500 people.
 - Seven of nine planned SSI Diversity Responsive Practice workshops have been delivered to NDIA and LAC providers, which contain a CALD disability component, attended by 101 participants.
 - Six NDIS-transitioned CALD organisations have been resourced to conduct interactive sessions on how to navigate the NDIS to their local language groups, with the NDIA and LAC providing information on their services.
 - An SBS radio campaign run over nine months has seen information broadcast in 13 languages to an estimated 240,000 listeners.
- The NSW Government, through the Department of Industry, established “Making It Our Business” to assist Aboriginal businesses and Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCO).
- Making It Our Business gives businesses the support and funding to achieve success within the disability sector, improving the delivery of culturally appropriate supports to Aboriginal people with disability.
- Making It Our Business was open to businesses already operating in the disability sector and to new entrants seeking to move into the sector. Through this program, the NSW Government is seeking applications from businesses that are focused on achieving success within the disability sector. Making it Our Business grant applications closed on 30 July 2018.

b) Can you provide a breakdown of the size and location of these providers?

- The NDIA and now the National Quality and Safeguards Commission are responsible for provider registration during transition and full scheme periods respectively. FACS does not hold data that provides a breakdown of the size and location of new providers.
- Through the Aboriginal Disability Provider Grants Program the six organisations referred to in the previous question were funded in Katoomba (Nepean Blue Mountains), East Nowra, Broadmeadow, Richmond, Redfern and Jannali (South Sydney).
- Through the Building Capacity of Aboriginal People, service providers referred to in the previous question were funded in Orange.

c) How many locations do not have available providers to deliver disability services?

- FACS does not hold data that provides information on the locations that do not have available providers to deliver disability services.
- As noted in Recommendation 1, b), the NDIA has the lead role and responsibility as the market steward and, where appropriate, will respond to, and intervene in, the market.

Recommendation 3

1. The response to the audit notes that the Department continues to support and build capacity for less prepared providers:

a) How much improvement has the Department seen in the readiness of providers since the Audit was conducted?

- Please refer to responses provided in Recommendation 1, a):

Recommendation 4

1. The response states that the Department continues to work with the Australian Government and the NDIA to share resources and lessons learned:

a) Can the department provide some examples of the lessons shared with the Australian Government?

- In July 2018 the final evaluation report for the Aboriginal Disability Provider Grant program was shared with the Department of Industry, DPC and the NDIA.
- PTAA Phase 1 and 2 results have been shared both internally (FACS Districts) and externally (NDIA).

The Department has shared lessons learned and resources created through various capacity building and sector readiness programs with the Department of and to ensure there is no duplication.