

**INQUIRY INTO THE EXERCISE OF THE FUNCTIONS OF
THE LIFETIME CARE AND SUPPORT AUTHORITY AND
LIFETIME CARE AND SUPPORT ADVISORY COUNCIL -
THIRD REVIEW**

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The Director
Standing Committee on Law and Justice
Legislative Council
Parliament House, Macquarie Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Hon Christine Robertson MLC

Thank you for the opportunity for EnableNSW to provide a submission to the third review of the Lifetime Care and Support Authority (LTCSA).

As part of the second review of LTCSA in 2009, EnableNSW commented on the collaborative working relationship that has developed between the two funding bodies in recognition that they both provide equipment and services to eligible people who have a permanent disability. This relationship has continued to develop during the past year with project work such as the establishment of joint Equipment Loan Pools to facilitate the discharge from hospital of people who have sustained a catastrophic spinal or brain injury.

In 2009 EnableNSW highlighted that the differences in what people can access through each funding body was causing confusion to shared consumer and stakeholder groups. During the past year, EnableNSW has continued to receive comments from clinical stakeholders regarding these differences. An example of these differences is that LTCSA participants with a spinal cord injury will generally be provided with two or more mobility devices such as two wheelchairs on discharge from hospital whereas EnableNSW consumers with the same injury are provided with their primary mobility device.

These differences may arise from a number of factors including how the schemes are funded, the fact that LTCSA provides equipment for treatment and whether equipment requests are reviewed by specialist prescribers to ensure that they are consistent with the scheme's policy.

LTCSS is funded through Compulsory Third Party Insurance premiums whereas the EnableNSW programs have a fixed annual budget. EnableNSW is required to ensure that the equipment it funds is the most cost-effective and clinically appropriate to meet a person's need. All non-standard complex requests are reviewed by a clinical advisor with reference to publicly available guidelines to ensure that this requirement is met.

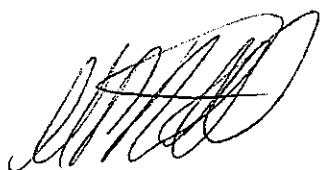
EnableNSW is concerned that these differences may contribute to situations of either less than optimal application of resources where a person may receive items which may be more discretionary in nature, or of inequity, where two people with the same injury and receiving treatment in the same rehabilitation facility will have different access to equipment and support depending on whether a motor vehicle was involved in their injury.

LTCSA is developing guidelines regarding what can be funded through the scheme and disseminates this information through a regular e-news. EnableNSW applauds the LTCSA on recent e-news editions that have included scenarios of specific requests which have been approved or declined as this provides clarity for clinicians and demonstrates the Authority's commitment to implementing mechanisms to ensure that equipment provided is consistent with the policy of "reasonable and necessary".

EnableNSW believes it is essential that the Scheme continues to develop and implement clear guidelines regarding what the Scheme funds and engages in cost effective provision and procurement practices to ensure it's sustainability in the long term. This is particularly important in light of the work being undertaken by the Productivity Commission on behalf of the Federal Government on a National Disability Insurance Scheme.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide a submission to this Review. Please contact Bronwyn Scott, Manager EnableNSW on 9685 3147 or Bronwyn.Scott@hss.health.nsw.gov.au if you require further information.

Your sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Mike Rillstone', written in a cursive style.

Mike Rillstone
Chief Executive

27 APR 2010