

CONTEXT SETTING: STATE DISABILITY SERVICE SYSTEM

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

OVERVIEW OF SOUTH AUSTRALIAN DISABILITY SYSTEM

- Relevant agency: Department of Communities and Social Inclusion
- Key statistics:
 - SDAC reports approximately 50,700 people in South Australia 0-64 have a disability that profoundly or severely limits their core activities.
 - In 2009-10, South Australia, Tasmania and the ACT had the highest rates of people likely to be eligible for state and territory delivered disability support services who used them (between 34.4% and 36.3%), 2009-10 CRC Report.
- Progression of agreed reform agenda:
 - The SA Government recently launched changes to move to individualised funding. Clients of South Australian disability Services who access six or more hours of disability support will be eligible. The Government intends to implement these changes by late 2012.
- Progress under the National Disability Agreement:
 - In October 2011, the South Australian Government released *Strong Voices* (a policy document)
 - South Australia has committed to a universal individualised funding system and self-managed funding for people who request to handle their own finances completely.
 - The South Australian *Carers Recognition Act 2005* has been reviewed after the fifth anniversary of its commencement. The report of the review has been completed and is to be laid before both houses of parliament.

FUNDING OVERVIEW

- In 2012-13, the Commonwealth will provide \$109.3 million through the National Disability Specific Purpose Payment.
 - The SA total state budget in 2011-12 was 16,116 million. The additional annual funding required by SA to provide 5,000 individual support packages is \$37.1 million. This represents 0.23% of the total budget.
 - The Australian Government Actuary has estimated that South Australia spends \$6,764 per person based on the population of people with a severe and profound disability in the SDAC.
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INDIVIDUALISED FUNDING

- Disability Services funded in South Australia include centralised access points to provide information. Support referrals and assessment are being implemented to enable people with disability to access available services.
- Clients of South Australian disability services who access six or more hours of disability support will be eligible for individualised funding arrangements.

- The Department for Families and Communities Strategic (DFC) Plan aims to provide greater choice and control to people with disabilities. The introduction of self-managed funding forms part of the plan.
 - The initiative will enable 70 people to transfer their current packages of services into a self-managed funding arrangement.
- People selected to participate in Phase One have the opportunity to manage their support and funding arrangements independently while others will be supported to do so by a carer or service provider.
- Individualised funding in South Australia is based on portable funding held by a service provider. While individual funding packages are common, they are not available across all service types in SA.
- Individual funding operates as a brokerage model to registered providers. The Disability Services Provider Panel registers providers that meet criteria before they can receive brokerage funding on behalf of a person.

ISSUES RAISED REGARDING INDIVIDUALISED FUNDING AND SECTOR SUSTAINABILITY

- The initiative to introduce individual funding arrangements is in the early stages of implementation and therefore the impact of this self-management initiative on the disability services sector in South Australia is yet to be understood.
 - Feedback from the sector is an important part of the developmental approach being undertaken. The evaluation will seek input from service providers and provide an opportunity for them to identify the impact of self-managed funding on the service system
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