

Office of the Public Advocate

Addendum to Report
People with intellectual disability
or cognitive impairment residing
long-term in health care facilities:
Addressing the barriers to
deinstitutionalisation

November 2013

The report is available online (including a plain text version) at www.publicadvocate.qld.gov.au or you may contact our Office for access to a hard copy. Full contact details are provided on the inside back cover.

Feedback on this report is welcomed. A publication survey is available online and may be submitted electronically. Alternatively, a hard copy may be requested from our Office.

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Response by the Department of Health and the Department of Housing and Public Works

The Public Advocate provided the Department of Health; the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services (DCCSDS); and the Department of Housing and Public Works with an indication of the recommendations that the Public Advocate would likely make in the final report in response to the issues identified in researching the project and the initiatives identified by the joint submission.

DCCSDS provided a response on 16 October 2013. This response was incorporated into the final report, *People with intellectual disability or cognitive impairment residing long-term in health care facilities: Addressing the barriers to deinstitutionalisation* (Final Report), notably in 'Part 6: What is Queensland Government doing?'.

Responses from the Department of Health and the Department of Housing and Public Works were received by the Public Advocate on 29 October 2013 and 1 November 2013, respectively. These responses were received following the report having been finalised and provided by the Public Advocate to the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice.

While the information below does not alter the recommendations made by the Public Advocate in the Final Report, it is presented in good faith to show the current and planned initiatives by Queensland Government, as advised by the relevant departments.

Please note that the information below is not a complete summary of the responses by the Department of Health and the Department of Housing and Public Works, but instead presents information that was NOT reflected in the Final Report in 'Part 6: What is Queensland Government doing?'.

Department of Health

Identified initiatives

Resources

The Department of Health will continue to estimate the cost of caring for people with disability in health facilities, but believes further analysis of the problem is unlikely to reveal any significant new information, given the Department supports the evidence that this group of people are more appropriately accommodated in other settings.

Prioritising people with disabilities in health facilities for funding and services

The Department of Health supports the initiatives to work closer with other government agencies to prioritise people waiting to transition into more appropriate accommodation.

Continuation of the Spinal Cord Injuries Response (SCIR) Initiative

The Department of Health supports the continuation of SCIR and is currently exploring options to replicate and adapt a similar program for people with ABI as part of the Joint Action Plan.

Planning of the Far North Queensland Project

The Department of Health supports the assertion that existing planning activities in far north Queensland could be further enhanced, and would see this being locally led by HHS and DDCCDS regional staff. The Department would be happy to correspond with the HHS about this initiative.

Full implementation of the NDIS

The Department of Health supports the need to incorporate improved service pathways, accessible services and appropriate accommodation, to enable this group of people to fully benefit under a national disability insurance scheme, as part of the whole-of-government preparation for the progressive implementation of the NDIS in Queensland from 1 July 2016.

Further initiatives

Further investment in rehabilitation services

The Department of Health is currently exploring options to improve access to community based rehabilitation.

Department of Housing and Public Works

Identified initiatives

Resources

The Department of Housing and Public Works agreed in principle to the analysis of resources required for caring for the cohort in health facilities versus the community, but did note the difficulties in comparing capital costs of accommodation in health settings versus community settings.

Action Plan

As identified in the Final Report, the Department of Housing and Public Works confirmed that it agreed in principle with the development of an Action Plan for transitioning people with a disability residing in long-stay health care facilities to community living.

The Department also identified that a range of non-social housing options is required to ensure these individuals are able to access the most appropriate model of housing for them. The Department of Housing and Public Works will support the identification of such housing options, and notes this work is occurring already in preparation for introduction of the NDIS.

Continuation of the Spinal Cord Injuries Response (SCIR) Initiative

The Department of Housing and Public Works identified that people with acquired brain injury may have different housing and support needs to those supported through SCIR and capital and home modification costs associated with providing social housing for this cohort may be higher than for those supported through SCIR. The Department stated that these considerations must be assessed against the need to meet increasing demand for social housing assistance in innovative ways.

Considering the needs of long stay patients in health facilities in the phased approach to the NDIS

The Department of Housing and Public Works is involved in modelling to assess the needs of individuals in this cohort as part of the transition to the NDIS. It is also engaged in a number of forums to understand and prepare for the potential increase in demand for housing assistance from NDIS participants, including identifying a range of successful housing models for people with a disability.

Planning of the Far North Queensland Project

The Department of Housing and Public Works is participating in planning for the transition of these young people to the community and agrees in principle that the project be funded, prioritised, individualised and coordinated to ensure appropriate opportunities for social inclusion and community participation by these individuals.

Full implementation of the NDIS

The Department of Housing and Public Works supports the need to incorporate improved service pathways, accessible services and appropriate accommodation, to enable this group of people to fully benefit under a national disability insurance scheme, as part of the whole-of-government preparation for the progressive implementation of the NDIS in Queensland from 1 July 2016.

Further initiatives

An investment in a range of accommodation options

The Department of Housing and Public Works is committed to working with other relevant agencies to ensure a range of appropriate accommodation options exist for people with a disability, including a mix of social and private housing options. The Department is engaged in a number of forums to scope the housing impacts on and prepare for Queensland's transition to the National Disability Insurance Scheme from 1 July 2016, with full implementation by July 2019. This work is occurring at the national level through the Housing and Homelessness Ministers Advisory Council, and includes estimating the potential increase in demand for social housing from NDIS participants and investigating successful models of housing for people with a disability. A detailed research synthesis report has also been compiled on housing options for people with a disability. This work needs to precede and inform government investment decisions and housing responses to ensure successful outcomes for people with a disability, both in the context of the NDIS and to assist people to transition from long-stay health facilities to the community.

