



Inquiry into Disability Care and Support

Productivity
Commission
Circular

14 April 2010
No. DCS 1

New Inquiry

The Australian Government has asked the Productivity Commission to undertake a public inquiry into a long-term disability care and support scheme. There are many questions about how to improve current arrangements, but some of the key ones include:

- how a scheme should be designed and funded to better meet the long-term needs of people with disability, their families and carers
- how to determine the people most in need of support, the services that should be available to them, and service delivery arrangements
- the costs, benefits, feasibility and funding options of alternative schemes
- how the scheme will interact with the health, aged care, informal care, income support and injury insurance systems
- its impacts on the workforce
- how any scheme should be introduced and governed
- what protections and safeguards should be part of the scheme.

The Government has asked us to advise on a scheme that will cover those most in need, with a disability present at birth, or acquired through an accident or through a health condition, but not as a result of the natural process of ageing. The full terms of reference are set out in Attachment A.

The Commissioners for the inquiry are Patricia Scott (presiding), David Kalisch and John Walsh (Associate Commissioner).

How can you be involved in the public inquiry?

The Commission welcomes the views of all people and organisations on how a scheme could be designed. You can send us your views in a submission — short or long. Submissions setting out your ideas are one of the main ways of helping us design a practical scheme that provides real support to people. We will also speak to a cross-section of organisations informally and hold public hearings.

We are also looking at other possible ways of involving people in the inquiry and in making our processes accessible and user-friendly. We will send out another circular on this in the next month.

If you have not already told us you have an interest in the inquiry, please complete Attachment B and return it by fax, mail or email to the address provided. You will be kept informed about the inquiry's progress.

The Commission will send further circulars and other information only to those who indicate their interest in the inquiry. The Commission will also put any updates about the inquiry on the web at www.pc.gov.au/projects/inquiry/disability-support.

We want your ideas

To help people prepare submissions, we will soon release an Issues Paper to provide background information and outline the main areas where we are seeking people's views.

You will also be able to respond to our draft report

Before preparing its final report, the Commission will release a draft report next year setting out what we are thinking of recommending to the Government. People can then provide their views on the draft report through further submissions and/or attendance at the Commission's public hearings.

Key dates

Release of Issues paper	May 2010
Initial public hearings	June/July 2010
Initial submissions due	End June 2010
Release of Draft Report	February 2011
Public hearings for Draft Report	April 2011
Second round of submissions due	April 2011
Final report	31 July 2011

What is a submission?

A submission sets out your views. A submission can be short. You could set out your key points in one or two pages. Or it can be long with your assessment of many issues. You decide what goes in a submission and how long it is. Where possible, you should provide supporting data and documentation.

While every submission is welcome, multiple, identical submissions do not carry any more weight than the merits of an argument in a single submission.

You can make more than one submission

You may want to put in more than one submission as you respond to what others have said or have new ideas.

Some examples

It may be helpful for you to look at some of the submissions made by people to other inquiries run by the Commission. Some examples of a long and short submission from the Commission's inquiry into paid parental leave are Elizabeth Hill and Barbara Pocock, (submission number 220) and Leanne Nicholson (submission number 67).

These can be found at: www.pc.gov.au/projects/inquiry/parentalsupport/submissions#initial.

Sending in your submission

If possible, you should send in submissions by email, and as a text document (.txt, .rtf), a Microsoft Word document (.doc) or similar format, rather than Adobe Portable Document Format (.pdf), to ensure screen readers can access it. Please remove any drafting notes, track changes and other hidden text, as well as any internal links and large logos and graphics. This will enable people to easily view and download submissions from our website. Please fill in attachment C as a cover sheet for your submission.

You may also send submissions by mail, fax or audio cassette, and we can make arrangements to record oral submissions over the telephone.

By mail: Disability Care and Support
Productivity Commission
GPO Box 1428
Canberra City ACT 2601

By fax: (02) 6240 3377

By email: disability-support@pc.gov.au

Being confident that we have heard from you

If you do not receive notification of receipt of an email message you have sent to the Commission within two working days of sending, please contact the Administrative Officer (see below).

You can find out other peoples' views

As this is a public inquiry, the Commission will make public submissions and transcripts available for others to read on its website (www.pc.gov.au) and at the Commission's offices in Canberra and Melbourne. Please contact the Commission for information about arrangements for obtaining access to hard copies of submissions.

Confidential submissions

We will normally place submissions on our website shortly after receiving them, unless they are marked confidential or accompanied by a request to delay release for a short period. Copyright in submissions sent to the Commission, however, resides with the author(s), not with the Commission.

The Commission seeks to have as much information as possible on the public record. However, where people are concerned that the material in their submission is too highly personal, we can accept submissions where the name of the submitter is withheld. Please clearly mark the submission as 'REQUEST NAME BE WITHHELD'. In addition, we will not make commercial information of a genuinely confidential nature publicly available. You should provide such information under a separate cover and clearly mark it as 'COMMERCIAL IN CONFIDENCE'.

Further information

If you have any queries please contact:

Roberta Bausch (administrative matters)	Ph: (02) 6240 3221
Ineke Redmond (other matters)	Ph: (02) 6240 3310
Clinton Pobke (other matters)	Ph: (02) 6240 3222
Email address	disability-support@pc.gov.au

Website:	www.pc.gov.au/projects/inquiry/disability-support
Fax number for the inquiry	02 6240 3377
Freecall number for regional areas:	1800 020 083
Speech relay service:	1300 555 727

You can obtain information on the Productivity Commission by looking at the Commission's website (www.pc.gov.au) or by contacting the Media and Publications section on (03) 9653 2244 or email: maps@pc.gov.au.

Productivity Commission Inquiry into Disability Care and Support

I, Nick Sherry, pursuant to Parts 2 and 3 of the *Productivity Commission Act 1998*, hereby refer a national disability long-term care and support scheme in Australia to the Productivity Commission for inquiry and report by 31 July 2011. The Commission will begin the inquiry in April 2010.

Background

The Australian Government is committed to developing a National Disability Strategy to enhance the quality of life and increase economic and social participation for people with disability and their carers.

The Commonwealth, along with the States and Territories, has a major investment in disability specific support. However, there remains a significant level of unmet demand for disability services which impacts upon the lives of people with disability, their families and carers. Demographic change and the anticipated decline in the availability of informal care are expected to place further pressure on the existing system over the coming decades.

While Australia's social security and universal health care systems provide an entitlement to services based on need, there is currently no equivalent entitlement to disability care and support services.

The Government is committed to finding the best solutions to improve care and support services for people with disability. An exploration of alternative approaches to funding and delivering disability services with a focus on early intervention and long-term care will be an *important* contribution to the National Disability Strategy.

Scope of the review

The Productivity Commission is requested to undertake an inquiry into a National Disability Long-term Care and Support Scheme. The inquiry should assess the costs, cost effectiveness, benefits, and feasibility of an approach which:

- provides long-term essential care and support for eligible people with a severe or profound disability, on an entitlement basis and taking account the desired outcomes for each person over a lifetime
- is intended to cover people with disability not acquired as part of the natural process of ageing
- calculates and manages the costs of long-term care and support for people with severe and profound disability
- replaces the existing system funding for the eligible population
- ensures a range of support options is available, including individualised approaches
- includes a coordinated package of care services which could include accommodation support, aids and equipment, respite, transport and a range of community participation and day programs available for a person's lifetime
- assists the person with disability to make decisions about their support
- provides support for people to participate in employment where possible.

In undertaking the inquiry, the Commission is to:

- 1 Examine a range of options and approaches, including international examples, for the provision of long-term care and support for people with severe or profound disability.

The Commission is to include an examination of a social insurance model on a no-fault basis, reflecting the shared risk of disability across the population. The Commission should also examine other options that provide incentives to focus investment on early intervention, as an adjunct to, or substitute for, an insurance model.

2. The Commission is to consider the following specific design issues of any proposed scheme:
 - eligibility criteria for the scheme, including appropriate age limits, assessment and review processes
 - coverage and entitlements (benefits)
 - the choice of care providers including from the public, private and not-for-profit sectors
 - contribution of, and impact on, informal care
 - the implications for the health and aged care systems
 - the interaction with, or inclusion of, employment services and income support
 - where appropriate, the interaction with:
 - national and state-based traumatic injury schemes, with particular consideration of the implications for existing compensation arrangements
 - medical indemnity insurance schemes.
3. Consider governance and administrative arrangements for any proposed scheme including:
 - the governance model for overseeing a scheme and prudential arrangements
 - administrative arrangements, including consideration of national, state and/or regional administrative models
 - implications for Commonwealth and State and Territory responsibilities
 - the legislative basis for a scheme including consideration of head of power
 - appeal and review processes for scheme claimants and participants.
4. Consider costs and financing of any proposed scheme, including:
 - the costs in the transition phase and when fully operational, considering the likely demand for, and utilisation under different demographic and economic assumptions
 - the likely offsets and/or cost pressures on government expenditure in other systems as a result of a scheme including income support, health, aged care, disability support system, judicial and crisis accommodation systems
 - models for financing including: general revenue; hypothecated levy on personal taxation, a future fund approach with investment guidelines to generate income
 - contributions of Commonwealth and State and Territory governments
 - options for private contributions including copayments, fees or contributions to enhance services.
5. Consider implementation issues of any proposed scheme, including:
 - changes that would be required to existing service systems
 - workforce capacity
 - lead times, implementation phasing and transition arrangements to introduce a scheme with consideration to service and workforce issues, fiscal outlook, and state and territory transitions.

The Government will establish an Independent Panel of persons with relevant expertise to act in an advisory capacity to the Productivity Commission and the Government, and report to Government throughout the inquiry.

The Commission is to seek public submissions and to consult as necessary with the Independent Panel, State and Territory governments, government agencies, the disability sector and other relevant experts and stakeholders.

Nick Sherry
Assistant Treasurer

[Received 17 February 2010]

REGISTRATION OF INTEREST

Disability Care and Support



Australian Government
Productivity Commission

Please complete and return this form to:

Disability Care and Support inquiry
Productivity Commission, GPO Box 1428, Canberra City ACT 2601

OR

By facsimile (fax) to: Roberta Bausch (02) 6240 3377

By email: disability-support@pc.gov.au

You can also register your interest online at the inquiry home page:
www.pc.gov.au/projects/inquiry/disability-support

Person

Organisation and position (if relevant)

Address

Suburb/town

State

Postcode

Email address

Phone ()

Fax ()

Mobile

Please tick if intending to make a submission

Inquiry material (circulars) will generally be distributed via email.

Please indicate if you would prefer material in an alternative format:

post

other (please specify)

Your details will only be used for the purpose for which you have provided them.

Productivity Commission
SUBMISSION COVER SHEET
(not for publication)

Disability Care and Support

Please complete and return this cover sheet with your submission to:

Disability Care and Support inquiry

Productivity Commission, GPO Box 1428, Canberra City ACT 2601

OR

By facsimile (fax) to: Roberta Bausch (02) 6240 3377

By email: disability-support@pc.gov.au

Person

Organisation and position (if relevant)

Address

Suburb/town

State

Postcode

Email address

Phone ()

Fax ()

Mobile

Please indicate if your submission:

contains NO confidential material

contains SOME confidential material (provided under separate cover and clearly marked)

contains confidential material and the WHOLE submission is provided 'IN CONFIDENCE'

Please note:

- For submissions made by individuals, all personal details other than your name and the State or Territory in which you reside will be removed from your submission before it is published on the Commission's website.
- Submissions will be placed on the Commission's website, shortly after receipt, unless marked confidential or accompanied by a request to delay release for a short period of time. **Submissions will remain on our website as public documents indefinitely.**
- Confidential material should be provided under a separate cover and clearly marked 'IN CONFIDENCE'.
- Copyright in submissions resides with the author(s), not with the Productivity Commission.