



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

STANDING COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, AGEING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES
BEC CODY MLA (CHAIR), VICKI DUNNE MLA (DEPUTY CHAIR), CAROLINE LE COUTEUR MLA

Inquiry into referred 2017–18 Annual and Financial Reports
ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Elizabeth Lee MLA: To ask the Minister for Disability

Ref: Community Services Directorate Annual Report, Office for Disability

In relation to: Disability Care workforce [page 58]

1. In Annual Reports hearings last year reference was made to a \$1.27m project to build capacity to meet the workforce requirements for the disability sector in the ACT. This year's Annual Report lists two events: an open house session with the wider Workforce Impact Collective in March and another similar session in April 2018 to discuss potential solutions raised at the open house session.
 - a. What has happened since?
2. What work has been done with vocational education providers such as CIT to accelerate training in this area?
3. What organisations have been approached or contacted the Office about workforce shortages?

Minister Stephen-Smith: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:–

1a. The Workforce Impact Collective (WIC) managed by National Disability Services continues to assist in building the capacity of the ACT disability sector workforce through a 'Collective Impact' approach. This means the commitment of key stakeholders has been sought to contribute to a common agenda for solving the shortage of workers with appropriate capabilities and attributes to meet the growing demand for services under the NDIS. The WIC is continuing to engage key stakeholders to explore, choose and develop ways to strengthen the base of potential and existing workers who are aware of, positively disposed toward and capable of, working in the disability sector.

The project has implemented an application and allocation process through which community partners are able to equitably, transparently and accountably access the financial support offered through the WIC to undertake workforce pilot projects.

As of November 2018 the key achievements of the project include the following two active pilot programs:

- **Mature Age Workers Network** managed by Achieve by Design commenced in July 2018. The Mature Age Workers Network targets people over 55 who have transitioned from long-term employment and are seeking purposeful and meaningful community involvement and some financial reward to meet their retirement needs. The pilot program is utilising focus groups, community partnerships and training to develop the recruitment and training pathway so that it meets the needs of people with disability and service providers and appeals to the target market of people over 55.
- **Communication** is a partnership with Service Users-Sharing Places which commenced in October 2018 and aims to resolve the challenges of communication between organisations, support workers, people with disability and their carers. The pilot will build the capability of the disability workforce by testing new ways of communication with the development of communication artefacts and tools which will be shared with the disability sector. Research into what key stakeholders really want also forms part of the pilot.

2. The Workforce Impact Collective (WIC) team is working with CIT on the current training opportunities available that align with the disability workforce and are working closely with Skills Canberra regarding vocational education and training. The WIC team is seeking advice from Skills Canberra, as well as accessing their research and contacts in vocational education and training in the ACT. The Mature Age Workers Network pilot are also utilising the current CIT disability training courses. Skills Canberra is a member of the Cross Governance Steering Committee that oversees the development, delivery and evaluation of the WIC project.

3. The Office for Disability has not approached organisations or been contacted about workforce shortages. The Office for Disability is in contact with the disability sector and regularly engages with ACT National Disability Services and the Mental Health Community Coalition regarding matters relating to the implementation of the NDIS, including workforce. The Office for Disability recognises that workforce is a significant issue and continues to work with the sector, the Commonwealth Government and the National Disability Insurance Agency to monitor this issue.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Health, Ageing and Community Services

Signature:



Date: 26/11/18

By the Minister for Disability, Ms Rachel Stephen-Smith