

Disability Employment Services - Concurrent Programs Advice



The Issue

The National Council on Intellectual Disability (NCID) requests that the Commonwealth allow people with intellectual disability to access Disability Employment Services (DES) and State transition to work programs **at the same time**.

Commonwealth guidelines prevent DES providers from assisting people with intellectual disability who are receiving support from state funded *transition to work* programs.

The guidelines prevent youth from seamlessly moving from transition to work programs to DES. Youth have to exit a transition to work program before they can access DES.

Families fear that exiting transition to work programs to seek employment creates a gap of idleness (i.e. sitting at home waiting for a job), a loss of skills and confidence, and a disruption to family routines. This prevents individuals and families from pursuing employment.

Best practice outcomes are achieved when a DES provider can search for a paid job while an individual is receiving transition to work support. An individual can then move to employment without any gap in support. This results in greater employment participation.

Transition to Work

Transition to work programs offer youth with intellectual disability,

- the possibility of work through work experience
- an address of employment participation barriers
- an alternative to vocational education and training pathways

A key reason for the success of transition to work programs is the engagement with youth who may not consider work as part of their future plan as they leave school. This has increased the number of youth with intellectual disability attempting and succeeding in open employment.

Disability Employment Services

The DES program is not able to fund transition to work support and open employment support.

Youth require help from DES providers to find a paid job, to learn job tasks at the workplace, and long term ongoing support for the life of the job. DES funding pays for this support, but not for transition to work support.

NDIS

These guidelines have broader implications for youth with intellectual disability accessing DES while participating in NDIS funded activities. They should not have to give up NDIS funded support to try open employment.

Recommendation

NCID first raised our concerns about this guideline with the Commonwealth in 2012. Guidelines can be changed by the Minister and the department.

NCID requests that the Assistant Minister for Social Service change the rules so youth with intellectual disability may access DES when receiving support from transition to work programs.

For enquiries please contact:

Paul Cain
0419 462 928