



The Department for Communities and Social Inclusion (DCSI) State-wide Equipment Program services the equipment and home modification needs of clients of Disability SA, Disability and Domiciliary Care Services, Novita Children's Services and Minda Inc. Assessment and prescription is undertaken within the specialist areas of Disability Services, Domiciliary Care and Novita. Domiciliary Equipment Service (DES) then manages the supply and maintenance of all equipment and home modifications.

Equipment Program Activity

During 2015-16 the Equipment Program has experienced a decrease in services provided compared with 2014-15. Major reasons for this are the reduction in the number of older people entering Domiciliary Care programs as a result of the Commonwealth's aged care reforms implemented 1 July 2015, as well as the continued transition of children to the NDIS.

However, demand for equipment and home modifications for people living with a disability remains high with a series of measures introduced to assist in managing the ongoing demand. Lower priority needs may be subject to delays as they wait for resources to become available. The impacts of these measures are continuing to be monitored.

Despite having demand management measures in place, 95% of needs for equipment have still been met. Offering a broad range of stock equipment for loan, along with high refurbishment levels, has enabled this. As at 31 January 2016, 91% of loan equipment needs were met by stock items. Of 8,795 equipment items supplied to clients, 7,107 (81%) were reissued items, to date this has provided an estimated net benefit of \$2.49m to the program.

NDIS Transition Update

DCSI and Novita continue to work closely with children who are transitioning to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). As at 31 January 2016, 28% of children previously known to DES have transitioned to the NDIS, with DES now providing services to 1,458 children registered with the NDIS (the majority being new children not previously known to DES).

The NDIS Assistive Technology (AT) Strategy was launched at the NDIS New World Conference held in Brisbane in October 2015. This conference brought together

participants, AT specialists and suppliers of all sizes to showcase some of the exciting developments in this space. Full details of the conference are available on the NDIS website - <http://www.ndis.gov.au/ndis-new-world-conference-2015>.

Changes to Ageing Services

On 1 July 2015, major changes were introduced to Australia's community aged care services. My Aged Care was established as a single access point for older people considering aged care services, including those people seeking support with help at home. An independent Commonwealth assessment service determines eligibility, and will then refer for services through either:

- the Commonwealth Home Support Programme for low level or short term services, or
- a Commonwealth Home Care Package (Level 1-4) for coordinated tailored packages of services managed within an individual budget.

New guidelines in these programs have meant that many existing organisations have changed the way they operate, or the range of services (such as equipment) are different.

For further information or to seek assistance, contact:

My Aged Care Contact Centre on: 1800 200 422

Domiciliary Equipment Service Website Launch

DES has launched a new website as part of its ongoing commitment to supporting clinicians and consumers accessing assistive technology.

A large number of documents that support the successful selection of equipment and home modification items are now available in an easy to access format. The site includes information about the services DES provides and the new website can be found at www.des.sa.gov.au.

We look forward to receiving any feedback or suggestions you might have about the website or any of DES services via the new online [feedback form](#).

Repairs

DES provides repair and maintenance to all types of assistive technology (AT) for people who use its services. In 2014-15 DES undertook 8,800 repairs (on road) using a network of suppliers and in house staff, costing approximately \$2.7 million. Wheelchairs and scooters accounted for 60% of these repairs.

Historically there has been a diverse range of skills and expertise with repairers. Training in the industry has been patchy, with a lack of data for quality benchmarking. This has led to inconsistent services for people needing repairs, compounded by a lack of investment in technology and systems generally.

As part of a longer term strategy to improve repair services, DES undertook a public tender during 2015 to establish a panel of approved repairers. The service specifications were developed with stakeholder involvement including consumers. New contracts are now in place with approved repairers, with benchmarks to cover the nature of the repairs, the skills required, the urgency of the repair and the operating hours. Further improvements and efficiencies will be rolled out during 2016.

Please remember to call DES for all repairs on 1300 130 302.

Planning for When Things May Go Wrong

Most items of equipment used will need repairs during its life cycle. DES will normally have a replacement item for stock equipment types, but specialised or customised items, such as powered mobility devices, may not be able to be replaced. Please talk to your clinician about what you should do if your equipment cannot be repaired quickly, and they can assist you to document a contingency plan at the time that you first receive this type of equipment.

Helping to Maintain Your Wheelchair

There are also some simple things that you can do to keep your equipment working well. Please ensure to:

- check your tyres have adequate pressure and keep them inflated
- check leads and wiring for moisture and wipe dry, especially with wet weather
- check the wheelchair controller and its case for any splitting
- leave your device charging when not in use. You can't overcharge it and the current it draws when fully charged is negligible

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