Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee

Supplementary Budget Estimates 2026–27

Thursday, 29 October 2026
Daily summary

The committee met from 9.00am until 8.28pm.

The committee called the Health, Disability and Ageing and Social Services portfolio, discussing the following topics:

Department of Health, Disability and Ageing (DoHDA): Outcome 1: Health Policy, Access and Support + Closing the Gap Outcomes

- Funding for First Nations health infrastructure;
- Stem cell registry tenders and bulk billing rates;
- Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) advice on approved and unapproved medicines;
- Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) vaccine and Guillain-Barre syndrome (GBS);
- Women's health package and Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) contraception cover;
- Spike proteins from the COVID-19 vaccine and test results;
- GP services and market viability in WA;
- GP scholarship and training programs;
- TGA strategic agreements;
- Rural and regional issues for midwives;
- Medicinal cannabis regulations;
- Funding of Indigenous Australians' Health Programme (IAHP);
- Proton health facility in SA;
- Funding of peak bodies for men's health;
- Impacts on the private health insurance rebate changes; and
- Data sharing and National Strategic Workforce Planning.

Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency

- Whistleblower policy and pathways;
- Proposed changes to the psychology training pathway and the role of Ministers; and
- Gender affirming care and clinical guidelines.

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW)

- *Australia's health 2026* report and data sets; and
- Smoking and vaping survey data and illicit tobacco.

National Health and Medical Research Council

- Fluoridation of water; and
- Use of puberty suppressants.

Australian Centre for Disease Control

- Analysis on Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV).

National Rural Health Commissioner

- Reforms for the Specialist Training Program in remote regions;
- Reduced workforce availability in remote regions; and
- *Forgotten Health Spend 2026* report and gaps in rural health access.

Department of Health, Disability and Ageing: **Outcome 4: Disability and Carers, NDIA and NDIS Commission**

- independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission investigation into National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) officers;
- NDIA corporate division staffing numbers;
- Mechanism for capturing overtime;
- National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) staff working from home arrangements;
- Staff training financial figures;
- Installation of an electric vehicle (EV) charging station at the Parramatta NDIS office;
- Information related to the Thriving Kids program
- Consultation paper on the National Principals for the Regulation of Assistance Animals;
- NDIS statistical data;
- NDIS handling fraud cases in past 6 months;
- NDIS Budget estimate for 2026-27, expenses, and registered providers;
- The National Disability Insurance Scheme Amendment (Integrity and Safeguarding) Act 2026Communications made by the National Contact Centre;
- Plan reassessment changes to protect work participation and volunteer work;
- NDIS Budget Reports and transport support;
- Social and community participation budgets from the last budget, and implementations that have evolved since last estimates;
- Safeguarding risk assessment of the legislative impact of NDIS support determinations;
- Website design and costs;
- Statistics related to fraud tip-offs; and
- Update on KPMG review into the specialist design accommodation (SDA) standards.

Department of Social Services (DSS): **Whole of Portfolio/Corporate Matters**

- Departmental funding for community services workers;
- Organisations who receive program funding;
- Recipient modelling forecasts for payments;
- Information and advertising campaigns;
- Ministerial responsibility for the portfolio and travel itineraries;
- Bringing them Home report recommendations and the Stolen Generation survivors;
- Administration of social security payments and the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations' (DEWR) implementation;
- Inquiry into the child protection crisis;
- Independent rapid review of the Regional Child Protection System in WA; and
- Ask Izzy program and funding from Services Australia.

Department of Social Services: **Outcome 1: Social Security**

- *Social Security Act 1991* and disability support pensions;
- Partner income testing for disabled individuals and their partners;
- Paid parental leave for partners and eligibility requirements;
- Commonwealth income support rates and financial counselling services;
- Robodebt payments and Royal Commission recommendations;
- Analysis of AIHW data on mortality and correlation with income support rates;
- Suicide rates among individuals receiving unemployment payments compared to the broader population;

- Child support debt growth, debt collection options and employer withholding arrangements;
- Expansion and initiation of Departure Prohibition Orders(DPO);
- Eligibility requirements for the Disability Support Pension(DSP) and support for individuals;
- Income support for individuals with intellectual disabilities; and
- International agreements for welfare payments and affordability of payments.

Department of Social Services: Outcome 2: Families and Communities + Closing the Gap Outcomes

- Compulsory income management;
- Voluntary income management and human rights;
- Staffing numbers in the income management branch;
- Government costs for administering the enhanced income management program;
- Genders of participating individuals in the Enhanced Income Management program;
- National Redress Scheme;
- Men's Referral Service; and
- Children and Family Support program.

National Commission for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children and Young People

- Referral of cases for Indigenous children and young people being reconnected with their families;
- Rapid review of the regional child protection system in Pilbara; and
- Deaths of Indigenous children in child protection systems;

The committee did not ask any questions of the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care, Australian Institute of Family Studies and the Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Commission.

This concludes the examination of the 2026–27 Supplementary Budget Estimates for the Community Affairs Legislation Committee.

Please contact the secretariat on (02) 6277 3515 or community.affairs.sen@aph.gov.au if you have any questions.